Prosecution seeks continuance in sentencing of ex-BMV director. PAGE 3

Senate panel goes over amendments, tackles provisions in proposed budget. PAGE 4

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

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THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 2023
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CNMI Recovery & Suicide Prevention Awareness Month
Proclamation Ceremony
September 5, 2023 | 10:00 AM
Taga Hall, World Resort | Saipan, CNMI

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios designated September as CNMI Recovery and Suicide Prevention month. Joining him in the proclamation signing that took place on Tuesday at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe were members of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Community Guidance Center, Department of Public Safety, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Suicide Prevention Program, and related organizations.

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN

Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:

23

Hundreds 'Light Up the Night'

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

» **Sept. proclaimed as NMI Recovery and Suicide Prevention Awareness Month**

After Gov. Arnold I. Palacios proclamed September as CNMI Recovery and Suicide Prevention Awareness Month last Wednesday morning, hundreds of community members, students, and members of government agencies gathered in the evening at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan for the 3rd Annual Light Up the

See HUNDREDS on Page 4

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Led by the Marianas High School, Kagman High School, and Kagman High School JROTC students, dozens of community members gathered on Tuesday to march through Garapan for the 3rd Annual Light Up the Night event.

FOR LEGISLATIVE, JUDICIARY STAFF

8-hour work reduction proposed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee yesterday proposed to reduce by eight hours the work hours of employees of the Legislative and Judiciary for fiscal year 2024.

Manglona

Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota), who chairs the Fiscal Affairs Committee and is drafting the Senate version of the budget, told *Saipan Tribune* that they proposed this to provide funds to the Tinian municipality to address its personnel needs.

Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Edwin P.

See 8-HOUR on Page 4

Urbano is acting CUC chief financial officer

Urbano

Cruz

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. chief accountant Rodolfo Urbano has been designated as CUC's acting chief financial officer while the agency is looking for someone to serve as permanent CFO position.

CUC acting chief executive director Betty G. Terlaje told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that more than two applied for the

See URBANO on Page 4

China market continues to show interest in returning to CNMI

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Despite Gov. Arnold I. Palacios' previous decision to pivot the CNMI away from its long-standing relationship with its China tourism market, tourists from the islands' previous main market still continue to show interest in returning.

According to a letter from Hong Kong Airlines addressed to the Commonwealth Ports Authority, they are interested in resuming flights to

See CHINA on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Gold's Gym Saipan is delighted to announce the appointment of Gerald Galang as its new assistant manager.
PAGE 11

ASIA
Southeast Asian leaders decided Tuesday that Myanmar won't take over the rotating leadership of their regional bloc.
PAGE 13

LIFE & STYLE
Joe Jonas filed for divorce from Sophie Turner on Tuesday after four years of marriage and two children.
PAGE 15

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GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

‘Tax credit for monetary donations great impact on healthcare system’

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee is in support of a bill that seeks to establish a tax credit for monetary donations made to public hospitals and/or clinics, which the panel found has great potential to make a profound impact on the CNMI’s healthcare system.

The committee chaired by Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan) recommends that House Bill No. 23-39 be passed by the full House in its current form.

Rep. Thomas John DLC. Manglona (R-Saipan) introduced the bill last March 31. The legislation was referred to the Ways and Means Committee.

According to a committee report submitted recently to House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), under the legislation, any person may take cash contributions made during the tax year to public hospitals and/or clinics as a nonrefundable credit against the tax imposed by the Commonwealth Code.

Yumul

No such credit shall be allowed for any amount deducted in determining taxable income under the Northern Marianas Territorial Income Tax as shown on the taxpayer’s return.

The maximum credit available in any one year under this section shall be the lesser of the sum of the taxes imposed under the Commonwealth Code, or $5,000.

In order to obtain the credit, the taxpayer must furnish to the Division of Revenue and Taxation a properly documented receipt issued by the recipient institution.

The receipt must include, at a minimum, the name and tax identification number of the institution, the taxpayer’s name and tax identification number, the date of payment and the amount paid, and the purpose of donation.

The taxpayer must also furnish a copy of the letter of determination with respect to the tax-exempt status of the recipient institution.

The committee’s analysis is that using the maximum amount that will be allowed, which is $5,000, with an example of 100 companies/businesses that adhere to this tax incentive, the CNMI will see a tax collection in the amount of $500,000 less each year.

The committee finds that the CNMI government, including federal and state governments, designs tax credits to encourage persons/businesses to make monetary donations/contributions to public hospitals and/or clinics that might otherwise have difficulty funding critical needs or improvements.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muna told the committee that the proposed bill could make a significant impact on the healthcare system.

Court imposes $10K bail for repeat offender arrested for assault

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a $10,000 cash bail on a repeat offender who was recently arrested anew for beating a woman who was trying to get away from him.

At a bail hearing last Tuesday, Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan imposed a $10,000 cash bail on habitual offender Alvander DLG Pua who was arrested for allegedly assaulting his girlfriend as she was trying to get away from him.

Pua, 30, is currently facing charges of assault, assault and battery, disturbing the peace, and domestic violence.

After the hearing, Pua was remanded back to Department of Corrections’ custody. He was ordered to return to court on Sept. 13, for a preliminary hearing while his arraignment was set for Sept. 25.

Pua was ordered to return to court on Sept. 13, at 10am for a preliminary hearing, and on Sept. 25 at 9am for an arraignment.

According to court documents, police responded to a domestic violence report on Aug. 5.

The caller, Pua’s girlfriend, told police that Pua punched and pulled her hair while she was inside her car and trying to get away from him.

Pua is currently on probation for a similar crime.

On the evening of Aug. 5, she said she had just finished grocery shopping with her two children and pulled up to their home. While they were parked outside the residence, they stayed inside the car.

While inside the car, she said Pua ran toward the car, held onto the driver’s door handle, and attempted to unlock it.

She said she was scared and locked her doors before driving away while Pua held onto the car door’s handle.

She said she drove a short distance, but Pua did not let go.

She said when she unlocked the door, Pua used his left hand to punch the right side of her face three times.

She said she drove off again because she wanted to get away from him as she feared him.

Police noted that the victim said on June 6, she also reported Pua to police for threatening to beat her up for asking him to leave her house.

Back in 2022, the Superior Court sentenced Pua to a 10-month prison term for assaulting the same girlfriend who reported the Aug. 5 incident.

Pua was released last Sept. 17, 2022, and was placed on probation for three years.

Prior to the 2022 assault, in 2018, Pua reportedly assaulted the same girlfriend, but she was seven months pregnant at the time.

Prosecution seeks continuance in sentencing of ex-BMV director

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. government, the plaintiff in the suit filed against former director of Department of Public Safety's Bureau of Motor Vehicles Juana Deleon Guerrero, has asked the District Court for the NMI to continue Deleon Guerrero's sentencing for a later time.

Assistant U.S. attorney Albert S. Flores Jr. filed last week a motion to continue the sentencing hearing for former BMV chief Deleon Guerrero at a later date so that federal agents are available to attend.

According to the motion, the prosecution is asking that the District Court for the NMI move Deleon Guerrero's sentencing from Nov. 17 to Dec. 1.

Flores added in his motion that the defense has informed the prosecution that they do not oppose the request.

District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, for her part, granted the request officially pushing Deleon Guerrero's sentencing to Dec. 1 at 1:30pm.

Back in June, Deleon Guerrero pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to unlawfully produce an identification document, specifically local driver's licenses.

Pursuant to her plea agreement, Deleon Guerrero is looking at a three- to five-year sentence for her involvement in fraudulently producing over 50 licenses to undocumented individuals.

According to the unsealed information, on or about Jan. 1, 2020, through about Dec. 20, 2022, on at least 50 occasions, Deleon Guerrero conspired with Li Yongde, or "Ivan," fellow BMV employees, residents of the CNMI without lawful immigration status, and others, to produce CNMI driver licenses unlawfully for 10 individuals without valid and current legal immigration status in the United States.

Specifically, Deleon Guerrero knowingly permitted Ivan, a citizen of the People's Republic of China without lawful immigration status, to bring other citizens of the PRC and of other nationalities without lawful immigration status to the BMV, where those foreign citizens were subsequently issued fraudulent CNMI driver licenses.

Ivan allegedly charged these individuals around $1,500 to $1,700 for a new license and around $300 to $400 for a renewal license.

Ivan would accept payments from foreign citizens and bring them to the BMV where they would meet with BMV staff, including Deleon Guerrero.

There, Ivan would assist foreign citizens by serving as a translator and by submitting driver license applications on their behalf that included fraudulent immigration documents.

The United States says Deleon Guerrero was aware that Ivan was facilitating these illicit transactions and even directed five members of her staff to assist Ivan with fraudulent distribution of CNMI driver licenses to foreign citizens without lawful immigration status.

The defendant also communicated directly with Ivan to make appointments or other necessary arrangements to facilitate the fraudulent scheme.

Deleon Guerrero accepted payments from Ivan, and others, through cash of upwards of $500.

In addition, the former director and five other members of the BMV were routinely treated to meals bought and paid for by Ivan.

Celebrate Halloween by visiting JKPL Trunk or Treat

Calling all Trick-or-Treaters! It's that time of the year and the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, the Northern Marianas Library Association and all our amazing community partners invite you all to please join us for the 10th Annual Community Halloween Trunk-Or-Treat event.

Held every year, this popular free public event helps to promote and strengthen community partnership and engagement, fosters family bonding, and provides families with an alternative activity to trick-or-treating door-to-door. This spooktacular event is scheduled for Oct. 31, 2023 from 3:30pm to 6:30pm at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library parking lot in Susupe, Saipan.

Since 2012, thousands of children and adults have enjoyed hours of fun dressing up in spooktacular costumes and trick-or-treating at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library parking lot. This year, we will have monetary prizes for the Best Family Halloween Costume Contest. Registration is required to participate in the costume contest.

JKPL will also have the return of People's Choice Award for Best Community Trunk. Last year, Saipan Cubs Alpha Leo Club won first place, Priority Care Services won second place, and Coca Cola Beverage Micronesia won third place. Which spooky trunk will be voted this year's People's Choice? Interested community partners and/or sponsors are invited to register a trunk or sponsor this year's event by emailing foremancelina@gmail.com, calling the library at 670-235-7315 for 2023 TOT Coordinator Celina or by picking up a registration and/or sponsorship form at your friendly Joeten-Kiyu Public Library.

How can you help with JKPL programs?

JKPL welcomes and encourages businesses to please consider donating Educational Tax Credit. Pursuant to NMI Public Law 15-120, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library is able to receive cash contributions under Educational Tax Credit (ETC). Please make checks payable to: CNMI Treasury. For MUNIS payments, please remit to the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library MUNIS Vendor ID#100404.

JKPL parking lot closed Oct. 27, 28, 30, 31

In order to prepare for the Annual Community Trunk-o-Treat event, the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's parking lot will be closed Oct. 27, 28, 30, and 31.

Please enjoy your public library's free resources by visiting our website at www.cnmilib.org like/follow JKPL's Facebook page @joetenkiyupubliclibrary, Instagram @joetenkiyupubliclibrary, Tik Tok @jkpl670, Twitter @Joeten-Kiyu, and Youtube: joeten kiyu public library or visit our website www.cnmilib.org to see the progress and programs JKPL has worked so hard to offer for our community. For more information regarding any of our activities, please contact JKPL @670-235-7322/7318. JKPL's normal hours of operation are as follows: Open Tuesday to Thursday 10am-6pm, Friday 1:30pm-7pm, and Saturday 9:30am -4pm. Closed Sundays, Mondays, Austerity Saturdays, and holidays.

This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services LS-LS-252496-OLS-22 and LS-253665-OLS-23.

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library is an equal opportunity provider and employer. ***(PR)***

Two arrested for theft

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety arrested last week two men involved in a reported theft at a warehouse behind Blue Sky Market.

Last Thursday, DPS officers arrested Mark Halstead and Jose Ngeskebei for allegedly stealing from an Imperial Pacific International (IPI) warehouse behind Blue Sky Market in Chalan Piao.

Both men are facing charges of burglary and theft.

The two men went before Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan Tuesday for a bail hearing. The judge imposed a $5,000 cash bail for Halstead and a $1,000 cash bail for Ngeskebei.

Bogdan ordered the two men to return to court on Sept. 13, for a preliminary hearing while their arraignments were set for Sept. 25.

According to court documents, On Aug. 31 at around 9:24am, police received a call reporting a theft in progress at the IPI warehouse behind Blue Sky Market.

The caller told police that he was feeding his dog outside the warehouse when he noticed the metal sheet on the warehouse door was dented outwards.

While he was trying to fix the sheet of metal, he said he heard people moving inside the warehouse so he peeked inside and noticed that there were two men inside.

After seeing the two men, the caller said he went into the jungle just behind the warehouse as he knew there was a path leading out from the warehouse through the jungle.

He stated he noticed a red pickup truck parked nearby with items from the warehouse in the bed of the truck.

He called for police assistance before following the red pickup truck to a residence in Chalan Kanoa.

The residence was later determined to be Halstead's residence.

Police went to Halstead's residence and spoke to the defendant who initially claimed he had just gotten home and when he did, Ngeskebei was already there with chairs and other items.

He allegedly later admitted that he was inside the warehouse with Ngeskebei who had woken him up earlier that day to load some stuff into his truck so he could sell them.

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CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB23-PAO-42300101

SUBMISSION DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2023
TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"LEASE OF ONE (1) CLASS 'F' VEHICLE FOR TWO (2) YEARS"

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QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO THE DEPARMENT OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE OFFICE BY SEPTEMBER 19, 2023, TO MR. PATRICK GUERRERO VIA EMAIL AT pguerrero@pa.gov.mp

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ PATRICK C. GUERRERO
GOVERNOR'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

/S/ GERALDINE T. CRUZ
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

Senate panel goes over amendments, tackles provisions in proposed budget

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee went over yesterday all the amendments they made from the House of Representatives' version of the proposed budget for government's operations for fiscal year 2024.

Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota), who chairs the Fiscal Affairs Committee, stated at the start of the meeting that the committee began deliberating on the budget bill and have worked on for the most part on the provisions within the budget.

"And that's what we are going to tackle today," said Manglona, adding that if they have time that day, they will begin discussions on the allocation of the $114.2 million, which is the net available resources for government activities.

Last week, the Senate and House conference committee adopted a concurrent resolution that sets the ceiling of the CNMI government's projected resources for fiscal year 2024 at $163.4 million, which is $9.1 million lower than Gov. Arnold I. Palacios' proposed budget. The resolution is set to be approved by the full House and Senate.

Manglona said the bicameral conference committee approved the overall identified budgetary resources at $163,415,313.

Manglona said they suspended all earmarks, except the Marianas Visitors Authority's Hotel Occupancy Tax, which they left that $4,584,654.

He said they kept the debt services—the bond payments at $3,617,000 and $3,265,375, the Settlement Fund at $34 million, pension obligation at $2,886,600, and the Marianas Public Land Trust 2019 loan at $822,753.

Manglona said that leaves net available resources for appropriation for government activities at $114,238,931.

The House had already passed their version of the budget bill.

CHINA

From page 1

Saipan come November.

"Our company is planning to fly to Saipan again this year in November. I am writing this [letter] to you for the potential opportunity to [work] with [CPA] again," the letter stated.

Hong Kong Airlines is only one of several other China-based airlines who have shown interest in flying to Saipan since the United States lifted COVID-19-related measures for visitors from China.

However, Palacios seems adamant to uphold his recent decision to pivot away from the market, which made up over 40% of the CNMI's tourism industry pre-COVID, despite various sectors in the CNMI pining for the market's return.

The entire CNMI economy continues to hurt due to the loss of the market and the lack of a replacement.

The Palacios administration did previously spark hope for the CNMI economy by expressing its plans to launch military tourism, but to date, there has been no new updates on the market.

Currently, due to the lack of airlines coming in, CPA has raised its rates significantly, it has implemented a reduction in hours for its employees, and has suspended its incentive program that once enticed new airlines to do business with the CNMI.

CPA chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said in a previous interview that these newly adopted changes do not work to entice airlines to do business with the CNMI, but unfortunately, until a new market comes online or the China Market returns, the board's hands are tied.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, CPA recently adopted a 90% increase in landing fees for both the Saipan airport's main terminal and the commuter terminals for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

In addition, the CPA board also adopted a 79% increase in its current terminal rental rate for both the Saipan International Airport's main terminal and for the commuter terminals for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

With the newly adopted budget, the CPA terminal rental rates for the Saipan International Airport's main terminal goes up from $19.49 per square foot to $34.92. Meanwhile, the terminal rental rates for all CNMI commuter terminals is now up from $7.79 to $13.97.

As for landing fees, with the 90% increase, CPA will now be charging international airline carriers $15.25 per thousand pounds of certified maximum gross landing weight of the aircraft; they were previously being charged $8.01. As for CNMI commuter terminals, the 90% increase would bring landing fees up from $4.81 to $9.15.

Aside from the increase in rates, the CPA board also adopted an eight-hour cut for all CPA employees and suspended its airline incentive program.

All these changes will take effect come fiscal year 2024, which starts on Oct. 1, 2023.

8-HOUR

From page 1

Aldan told the committee last Aug. 17 that if the Senate passes the House of Representatives' version of the budget, he will be informing all 96 employees of the Tinian municipality by Oct. 1, 2023 that their employment will not be renewed.

Last Aug. 10, Rep. Patrick H. San Nicolas (R-Tinian) voted against passing the House's budget legislation because he believes that the bill does not fund the 108 employees needed by the Tinian Mayor's Office.

Manglona said yesterday that they also proposed to provide some funds to Government Health and Life Insurance and removed funds from Medicaid.

The committee went over yesterday all the amendments they made from the House's version of the proposed budget for the government's operations for fiscal year 2024.

Manglona stated at the start of the meeting that the committee began deliberating on the budget bill and had worked on for the most part on the provisions within the budget.

"And that's what we are going to tackle today," said Manglona, adding that if they have time that day, they will begin discussions on the allocation of the $114.2 million, which is the net available resources for government activities.

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PETS OF THE WEEK

Daisy and Max

Daisy is a sweet little female pup in need of a loving home. Max is a cute white and tan spotted boy ready to wiggle his way into your heart. Both are 10 to 12 weeks old.

Daisy and Max, along with lots more cats and dogs are available for adoption at the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido. Shelter hours are from Monday to Friday, from 7:30am to 4:30pm. Contact them if you are interested at (670)-234-3647 (DOGS).

For inquiries about veterinary services, reach out to Saipan Humane Society at info@saipanhumanesociety.org or Whatsapp +1 (670) 838-7387.

Saipan Tribune *is partnering with Lauren Cabrera, founder of the Saipan Humane Society, in collaboration with the SMO Animal Shelter in As Perdido, to feature their adoptable dogs into loving homes. Whether you are looking for a guard dog, lap dog, hiking buddy, or playful puppy, they most likely have the dog for you!*

URBANO

From page 1

CFO position and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved two.

Terlaje said they are going to interview one who qualified for the position.

She said Greg Cruz's contract as CFO expired and his last day was on May 21, 2023.

Terlaje said they offered Cruz a contract renewal, but he gracefully declined for family reasons.

Cruz and his family are staying in Guam. He is a former Guam Waterworks Authority CFO. CUC hired him in April 2019.

Before Cruz, Antonio Castro served as CUC's CFO. When Castro left, Corina L. Magofna, who is now a senator, served as acting CFO.

With respect to Urbano as acting CFO, Terlaje said he is a U.S. certified public accountant who has been with CUC for six years now.

Terlaje said Urbano is not applying for the CFO position.

HUNDREDS

From page 1

Night event.

The event was held to raise awareness on suicide prevention. After a short delay due to heavy rains, participants gathered and marched together to the American Memorial Park and back to the Carolinian Utt, where they indeed lit up the night by creating a large heart made of tealight candles.

Suicide Prevention Program manager Ana Ada shared a bit about the event that evening.

"This is our third year... it's really about raising awareness sharing that suicide is preventable."

She shared her appreciation for the Public School System that was a major part of the event as well as the Department of Public Safety, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, as well as the Veterans Affairs Office for their participation in this event.

Ada shared that this was the first time for them to join Suicide Prevention Awareness with the National Recovery Awareness Commemoration which are both observed in September. Her message to the community was that they are here for them.

"It's okay, you're always going to run into life's challenges, but use the time you've been given wisely. Be active. I know we're all going to face challenges one way or another but there's hope, there's help, there's providers out there, there's programs that can help a person to face those challenges."

Suicide Prevention Program mental health counselor Sharina Clark said over the past nine years there have been over 60 suicide completions in the CNMI.

"Our program alone since 2018 has provided services to over 580 individuals, the youngest being 6 and the oldest in their 70s. So we felt that there was really a need to bring the community together to raise awareness. And we were fortunate to have the JROTCs from each high school because they make up the bulk of this, participation wise. Also we are getting into raising awareness on veterans suicide and military service members who succumb to suicide and also just raise awareness. So it's really nice that we have the JROTC so if they do go into the military they go in with a mindset that there is help and there are people they can talk to... so when they need help they can actually get it."

She said the over 60 people who have taken their lives since 2014 is a big number considering the size of the community, adding that since suicide is a taboo and carries with it a stigma this subject isn't really talked about.

Clark, however, wanted to have an event like this to raise awareness."

Clinical Services director Glenda George, from the Community Guidance Center under the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., shared her thoughts about the event.

"None of this can happen without one another. As a community we have to work together and continue to lift one another as we continue to navigate our way through the human challenges that everyone goes through. Sometimes it gets to the lowest point, and people feel that there's no light, but there is, they just can't see it, and they need one another to show them where that light is."

As one of the very first advocates and developers for mental health services in the CNMI, Addiction Services administrator Joe-Kevin Villagomez shared that it was touching to see last Wednesday's event.

"I'm speechless, and I'm happy with the people wanting to help, people wanting to step up... we just sent one email and look at the results with the people coming out, so it's gratifying. But it's just not for this month at least for us and our team, it's every single day, including weekends, just reaching out to make a difference."

Drinks, popcorn, snow cones, T-shirts, and other incentives were given out to participants, and pamphlets with information on available services were also spread. The event lasted until 9pm.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Members of M2 dance group Zumbalizious smile for the camera during M2 Fitness' third anniversary celebration last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

M2 turns three

M2 Fitness coaches, committee, and M2 Zumba Shadows pose during M2 Fitness' third anniversary celebration last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

M2 fitness president Mary Grace Bautista gives her remarks during M2 Fitness' third anniversary celebration last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Nearly 200 individuals attended the third year anniversary celebration of M2 Fitness held last Saturday at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

The celebration was full of raffle drawings with the grand prize being $300, as well as Zumba testimonials, and several Zumba dance performances by M2 groups such as Zumba Kids and Zumba Kids Juniors, M2 Zumba Shadows, Zumbalizious, and the Dancing Venum.

M2 Fitness founder, president, and instructor Zin Mary Grace Bautista was happy with the turnout in the event.

"We've always had big events every year, actually twice a year with the anniversary events and Christmas party we do that every year. And just like last year we invited two celebrities, and we were packed with 400 to 500 people. For this time the third year we made it very exclusive only for M2 members and their own guests."

The night certainly highlighted M2's accomplishments since its inception during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, its rapid growth to an estimated 200 attendees in a couple of months, using a space at the TSL Plaza to now having their own studio which they moved into in February this year. The fitness team currently functions six days a week, with 180 steady members and various programs including the popular Aqua Zumba held at Aqua Resort Club in San Roque.

Paz Echavez, a member of dance group Zumbalizious was one of the first members to join M2, and she shared her thoughts about the night and being involved with M2.

"It feels really good," she explained that it also feels good to get up and do exercise weekly, proudly stating that even at the age of 64 she's still involved with the group and happy to be a part of it.

"Tonight we want to give appreciation and recognition to all the members who have kept believing, trusting, and supporting us to continue without them there is no M2. So we owe this to all the members and the people who love us. They were actually the backbone of M2. we are only the front but the people that believe in us are the backbone that let us stand where we are right now," said Bautista.

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NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a special meeting is being called on Friday, September 08, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in the CPA Tinian Administration Office located at the Francisco Manglona Borja/Tinian International Airport, Tinian. The following items are on the agenda for the above referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

III. SPECIAL MEETING ITEM(S):
1. Annex VI Exemptions

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION (if needed)

V. MISCELLANEOUS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed.

KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS
Chairwoman, Board of Directors

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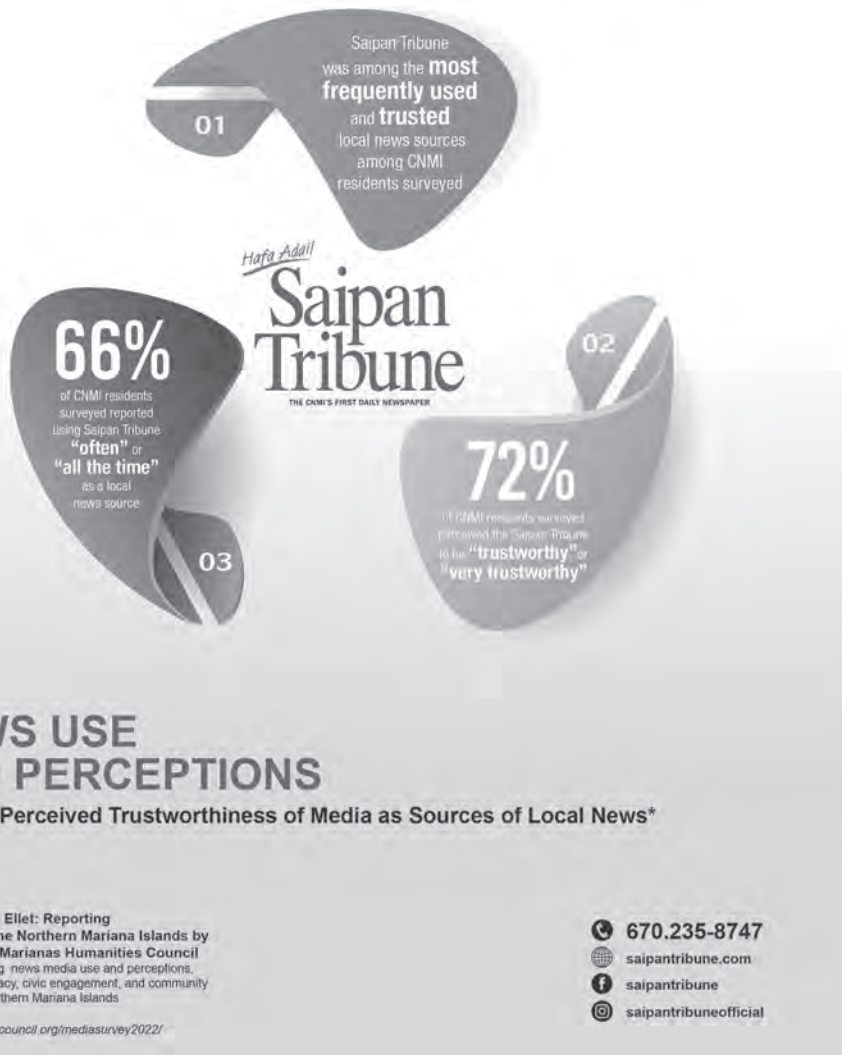
01
Saipan Tribune was among the most frequently used and trusted local news sources among CNMI residents surveyed
Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
66%
of CNMI residents surveyed reported using Saipan Tribune "often" or "all the time" as a local news source
02
72%
of CNMI residents surveyed perceived the Saipan Tribune to be "trustworthy" or "very trustworthy"
03
NEWS USE AND PERCEPTIONS
Use and Perceived Trustworthiness of Media as Sources of Local News*
*Source:
i Minagåhet – Eliet: Reporting the Truth in the Northern Mariana Islands by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council
A study regarding news media use and perceptions, news media literacy, civic engagement, and community values in the Northern Mariana Islands
https://www.nmhcouncil.org/mediasurvey2022/
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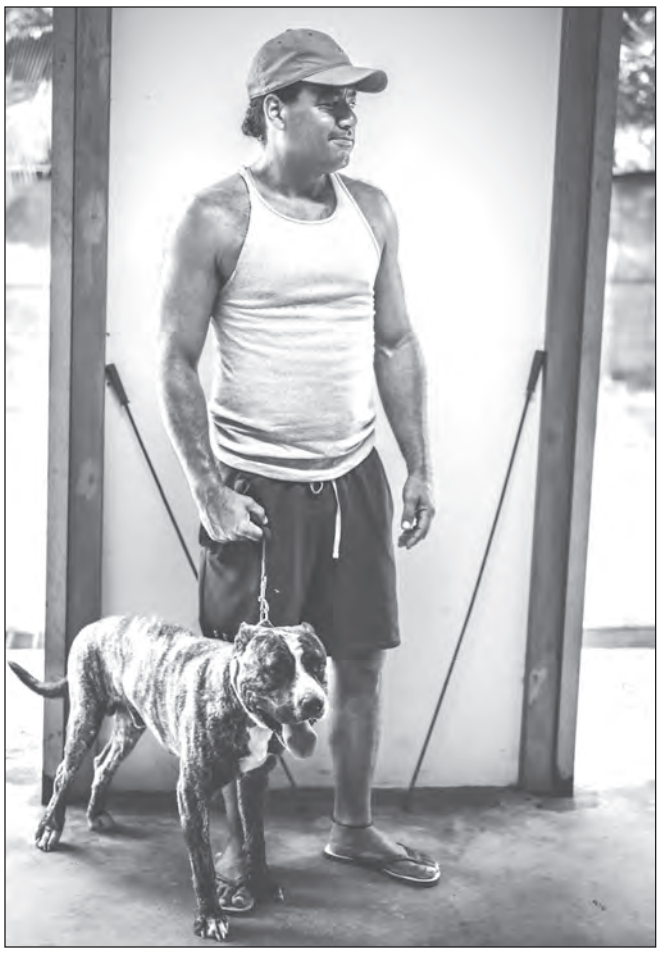
Saipan Humane Society spay/neuter clinic

PHOTOS BY BRADY QUINN



Saipan Humane Society's spay/neuter clinic attracted its fair share of owners and their pets.

A pet owner checks into Saipan Humane Society's recent spay/neuter clinic at the Saipan Mayor's Office's Animal Shelter in As Perdido.

Dr. Mariah Coakley performs a pre-surgery exam on a pet.

Saipan Humane Society volunteer Dorsha Moreno and Dog Control Program staff Stephanie Camacho give love to a puppy checking into the clinic

Saipan Humane Society volunteer Ruby Johnson smiles at the camera.

Saipan Humane Society surgery team at work.

Dr. Mariah Coakley and Yogi Singh check on a pet dog. The Saipan Humane Society can be reached via www.saipanhumanesociety.org or (670) 838-7387.

The Saipan Humane Society is not open daily. Please check their social media for announcements regarding clinic dates.

Dog Control Program staff Toshi Togawa assists a dog checking into the spay neuter clinic

MVA holds 2023 Seoul-Busan Roadshow

MVA

A similar roadshow was held on Aug. 29 in Seoul. South Korea has been the top source market of The Marianas since 2017.

More than 100 tourism partners from South Korea and 20 partners from The Marianas participated in The Marianas Seoul-Busan Roadshow held last week.

Held on Aug. 29, 2023, in Seoul and Aug. 31, 2023, in Busan, the roadshow allowed participants to share information and network about the post-pandemic travel market and receive up-to-date information from hotels and tour operators in The Marianas. The roadshow featured presentations from the Marianas' partners and the MVA.

"I want to thank you —our partners in the Korea travel industry —for the strong partnership we forged during the pandemic under the South Korea—CNMI travel bubble—the first travel bubble between South Korea and any United States jurisdiction. Together, we rebooted tourism between our destinations when most international leisure travel was shut down across the world," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion in his welcoming remarks at the event.

"Your partnership is essential, and we look forward to strengthening those partnerships today and building new ones."

Eleven major hotels in Saipan and nine other partners including tour operators, car rental brands, and luxury retailers traveled to Korea for the roadshow to provide updated information to key partners in Korea, while several ground handlers in The Marianas also participated in discussions with Korean travel agents and airlines to promote future sales of Marianas travel products. The Commonwealth Office Transit Authority (COTA) was also on hand to announce the resumption of local public bus service on Saipan this October for the first time since the pandemic.

Since 2017 South Korea has been The Marianas' top source country, accounting for more than 80% of all international visitors in the last two years. Sharing the upward trend in total air supply between Korea and Saipan, which recovered to 92% in the third quarter of this year compared to 2019, the MVA emphasized that the cooperation of Korean partners is essential to maintain and increase demand and supply on the Incheon-Saipan route, which averaged an 81% seat occupancy rate from August 2022 to July this year. ***(PR)***

MVA

The 2023 Marianas Busan Roadshow was held on Aug. 31, 2023, providing an opportunity for tourism partners in The Marianas and South Korea to share information and network.

OIA announces $1.4M to protect, support coral reefs in insular areas

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) has announced $1,432,994 in fiscal year 2023 Coral Reef and Natural Resources Program (CRNR) grant funding that will go towards supporting programs and projects related to coral reef and natural resources protection in the territories and the freely associated states.

"Coral reefs are important income generators for tourism and food industries in island economies; and while coral reefs protect and harbor fish and other coastal resources, they also provide islands with critical protection from erosion and wave action from storms.," said Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor. "We are grateful to Congress for providing this funding and helping the Insular Areas protect these unique natural resources."

Projects and programs funded through the Coral Reef and Natural Resources program in fiscal year 2023 for the Insular Areas follow:

U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) - $350,000

■ Funds will support the USVI Department of Planning and Natural Resources in ongoing research to assess Coral Larval Growth and efforts to re-establish and support resilient coral colonies.

Guam - $325,000

■ Funds will support the Guam Department of Agriculture's Coral Reef Initiative for management, coordination, education, outreach, research, and regional coordination related to the protection of coral reef natural resources.

Republic of Palau - $299,994

■ Funds will support Baseline Marine Habitat mapping for Palau conducted by the Coral Reef Research Foundation to understand introduced flora and fauna in Palau.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) - $245,000

■ $120,000 will support the CNMI Bureau of Environmental Control and Quality for management, coordination, education, outreach, research, and regional coordination related to the protection of coral reef natural resources.

■ $125,000 will support the Mariana Islands Nature Alliance Tasi-Watch program.

All Territory Participation in the National Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program

■ $213,000 has been awarded to support a new cohort of fellows for American Samoa, the CNMI, Guam, and the USVI in the National Coral Reef Management Fellowship program. The program also includes fellows for Florida, Hawai'i, and Puerto Rico who are funded through NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program. Managed by the Nova Southeastern University's Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography, the fellowship provides state and territorial coral reef management agencies with highly qualified individuals whose graduate-level education and work experience meet each jurisdiction's specific needs, while providing the individual fellows with professional experience in coastal and coral reef resources management.

Cantor

The CRNR is a discretionary program, and only provides funding for needs and training related to coral reef resource management and combatting invasive species in the Insular Areas. Other similar discretionary programs funded by OIA are the recently announced Maintenance Assistance Program and the Technical Assistance Program, portions of which were announced by Secretary Haaland on her recent trip to the Pacific.

Funds under these discretionary programs are distributed through a competitive grant application process that is open for applications each year in October on grants.gov under CFDA 15.875. More information about these and other funding provided to the Insular Areas through OIA may be found at www.doi.gov/oia.

The Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs and the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) carry out the Secretary of the Interior's responsibilities for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, OIA administers and oversees federal assistance under the Compacts of Free Association to the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. OIA also administers a discretionary Technical Assistance Program for all the Insular Areas. ***(PR)***

Palacios, Santos named to SNHU Summer 2023 Dean's List

MANCHESTER, NH—It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates Leeandra Palacios and Mary Ann Santos of Saipan on being named to the Summer 2023 Dean's List. The summer terms run from May to August.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired eight-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Southern New Hampshire University is a private, nonprofit institution with a 90-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 170,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 accredited undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as one of the "Most Innovative" regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner. Learn more at www.snhu.edu. ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

The downside of Biden's drug price control scheme

Economic fallacies are like horror movie villains. They just won't stay dead.

On Tuesday, the Biden administration announced it had selected 10 drugs for Medicare price "negotiation." The list included drugs for diabetes, heart failure and blood cancer, among others. The White House said these are some of the most costly to the Medicare Program. In future years, Medicare will negotiate the prices on dozens of other drugs. The administration claims this will save money for both Medicare recipients and taxpayers

This sounds innocuous, even necessary. Of course, the federal government should use its purchasing power to obtain lower prices. But that's not what's happening here.

Consider Bristol Myers Squibb. Its blood thinner, Eliquis, is one of the 10 drugs on Biden's list. In a real negotiation, the company and Medicare would meet together. If they couldn't come to a mutually beneficial agreement, both would go on their separate ways. But that's not what will happen under the Inflation Reduction Act, which created this arrangement.

That bill sets the price ceiling of a selected drug from 25% to 60% of its list price. If a drug company wants to walk away, the law hits it with a daily excise tax that begins at 186% of the daily revenue generated by the drug. The tax eventually climbs to a staggering 1,900%.

That's not a negotiation. It's a stickup. What the Biden administration is looking to do is institute price caps on drug prices, disguised with rhetorical flourishes.

It's easy to predict what will happens next, especially if you're familiar with the long-term damage done by rent control. Drug companies will invest less in making new drugs. A University of Chicago study from November 2021 projected that 135 fewer drugs through 2039 would be brought to market because of this law. The study found that would cause a loss of 331.5 million life years in the U.S. For context, at the time of the study, COVID-19 had resulted in 10.7 million life years lost in this country.

This isn't mere conjecture. Economist Tomas Philipson, one of the study's co-authors, reported that at least two dozen drug companies have already pulled back on drug development because of this bill.

In response, pharmaceutical companies have sued. They argue that this scheme violates the "takings" clause of the Fifth Amendment. That prohibits the government from taking private property for "public use, without just compensation." Although how courts will rule is uncertain, that's obviously what's happening here.

Those who look forward to lifesaving medical breakthroughs should hope these lawsuits are successful.

©2023 Las Vegas Review-Journal

Breaking news! The BIDEN Administration is considering banning home air-conditioners in order to help their new Green Energy bill!!
HISTORIC HEAT WAVE GRIPPING LARGE PORTION OF U.S.!!
IS THIS ON THE BIDEN HORIZON?

Green energy economy is sprouting up all over red and blue America

By KEN SILVERSTEIN
Tribune News Service

Ken Silverstein has covered energy and the environment for years. He wrote this for InsideSources.com.

Georgia is in the nation's spotlight—because it has attracted a $2.5 billion investment from one of the world's best-known solar panel makers.

Ironically, it is in the home district of Rep. Marjorie Taylor Green, who viscerally opposed the legislation that made it a reality: the Inflation Reduction Act, which President Joe Biden signed a year ago. South Korea-based Qcells, which will employ 2,500 people in the state, credits the act's incentives.

Greene represents the northwestern section of Georgia, which the carpeting industry made prosperous. But hard times hit in 2008, devastating that industry and making it easy pickings for populist politicians. But lip service doesn't provide jobs. And Biden created the incentives that have delivered—not just in Georgia but nationwide.

"When something becomes a pocketbook issue and creates jobs and economic growth, people start to rethink their opinions," said Bob Keefe, executive director of Environmental Entrepreneurs, or E2. "Very few people have seen glaciers melting, but everyone understands what it means when a factory comes to town and creates 1,000 jobs."

According to E2's findings, the private sector has announced at least 210 significant new green energy and clean vehicle projects across the country since the act's passage. That will create 74,181 jobs and attract $86.3 billion if they come to fruition. That includes a lot of electric vehicle and battery manufacturers in addition to wind and solar plants. Thirty-eight states will share in the benefits—both Red and Blue.

Take Kansas. Panasonic is building a $4 billion electric vehicle battery plant primarily to supply Tesla, creating 4,000 jobs in the town of De Soto. And that's just a start for the manufacturer—if the EV industry continues to make inroads.

Ruby red West Virginia is also attracting battery manufacturing plants, providing 21st-century jobs in a state where coal has historically fueled the economy. To that end, Sparkz Inc. and Form Energy will produce energy storage devices, creating hundreds of jobs. Sparkz chief executive Sanjiv Malhotra said the Inflation Reduction Act is the catalyst.

Yet, the state's two congressional representatives opposed the law that made it possible—the same two who refused to certify the Biden presidency. Reps. Carol Miller and Alex Mooney have placed politics over economics, thinking this is their ticket to prolonged political lives.

E2's Keefe says that in the short run, politics trumps economics. But that will change, pointing to electric vehicle factories that have revitalized Georgia and South Carolina—something that is playing out nationally. When their citizens work in modern factories and see those cars on the road, they will take pride.

"Maybe people will start to think a little differently about green energy and climate change," he said.

Respectfully, cheap fossil fuels powered the industrialization era. But everyone alive today has experienced the effects of climate change, requiring adjustments. Capitalism can usher in the evolution by aligning profit-seekers with climate-friendly businesses. The market will reward companies embracing the challenge while the laggards get left behind.

Tesla is a national example. Just look to Kentucky, long-rooted in the coal sector: BlueOval SK is building two electric vehicle battery plants employing 5,000 people. It's also building one in Commerce, Georgia, that will hire 3,000 workers.

"The Inflation Reduction Act is the greatest economic policy that this country and the world has seen in a very long time," Keefe said. "It's the equivalent of expanding the interstate highway system and going to the moon. America is getting back in the game."

Politics now obscures the message. But results will speak louder than rhetoric—once the green energy economy starts flourishing.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

My family kept secrets. 'Oppenheimer' drives home how complex those secrets were

By FRANCESCA SMITHWICK-DRIVER
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Out of the blue in 2011, I received an email from a historian at the Los Alamos Historical Society in New Mexico. She said that because I was a descendant of settlers on the Pajarito Plateau in northern New Mexico in the decades before World War II, I was entitled to receive a history book commissioned by Congress.

It was part of an effort to make amends for the government's abrupt seizure of the land in 1942 to build the Los Alamos laboratory, where the first atomic bomb was developed.

I was dumbfounded.

When I was growing up, neither my father nor my grandmother, Constance Smithwick, ever said a word to me about having lived in New Mexico. My mother, who was only briefly married to my father, rarely spoke of him. And both my parents and grandmother died in the late 1970s, so their stories were lost to me. When the Los Alamos historian asked me if I had any photos or stories about my family's life in the area, I said I had nothing to share.

The book, "Homesteading on the Pajarito Plateau, 1887-1942," arrived a short time later.

Reading the parts about my family only deepened the mystery of the silence of my father and grandmother about their lives on the plateau. But it clarified historical aspects of their story, including issues of power, race, privilege and loss made newly relevant by the movie "Oppenheimer."

In the American West, homesteaders on government land, by law, became owners of their land after at least five years of farming, ranching or otherwise improving the acreage. The Pajarito Plateau, a high-altitude volcanic region of mesas and canyons, had a settler community. Hispanic farmers and ranchers, many whose families had lived there for generations, owned most of the few dozen homesteads, which ranged from 10 to 160 acres. The land was semi-arid, water was scarce, and the growing season was short. But by no means was the land vacant when the government chose the area for the Los Alamos facility and evicted the people.

My grandparents, of Irish descent, were part of that community. Starting in 1921, they lived on and managed the plateau's Anchor Ranch, a 320-acre spread. The ranch was owned by the Ross family of New York. In exchange for providing care at the ranch for a mentally disabled son of that family, my grandparents had run of the place. They are credited with creating a viable enterprise and improving some of the roads that ran through the canyons.

They left the plateau in 1937 due to my grandfather Francis' failing health and relocated to Desert Hot Springs in California, another off-the-grid location in those days. Any hope my grandmother may have had to return to Anchor Ranch was dashed in 1942, when the Rosses sold the land to the U.S. government for $43 an acre.

That transaction was later cited in a petition to the U.S. government by the descendants of Hispanic homesteaders who sought reparations because their relatives were paid as little as $7 an acre for their land. In 2004, when Congress established a $10-million fund to repay the descendants, the settlement included a provision to create the book I received.

Although everything the Los Alamos historian wrote in her email was news to me, it jogged my memory.

When my grandmother died in 1977, I was given a box labeled "Connie's stuff" by the person who had gathered her belongings. I never looked through it. But during a move in the mid-1990s, the box buckled and a large manila envelope spilled its contents. There were photos of log cabins, children playing with puppies, women on horseback, picnics, sledding. Having never heard my father or grandmother say anything remotely related to these images, I put the photos into a new box and stored it in the garage.

I took another look in 2011, after the email from the Los Alamos historian. I spread my grandmother's papers on my living room floor, and there, along with the pictures, was a tattered clipping from the Los Alamos Times of an interview with Constance in 1947 entitled "Mesa Old Timer Recalls Pre-Atom Project Period."

The interviewer asked Constance how she felt visiting the Pajarito Plateau, now unrecognizable and the site of the "unfolding of the most revolutionary development in the history of the world—the atomic power project."

"I have no resentment whatsoever that my old world here has been turned upside down by all of this," she said. When I knew her, my grandmother was anything but accepting.

In the interview, Constance described their happy and harsh life on Anchor Ranch. She referred to her family as pioneers who built cabins, raised horses and cattle, grew alfalfa, hunted, fished, went sledding after brutal snowstorms and attended "gala affairs where women rode to parties on horseback in their elegant finery with their dancing shoes in their saddlebags." The family had a passion for dogs—Airedales and St. Bernards. In her telling, life was a long, wholesome, outdoor adventure.

All of it only raised more questions for me. If life at Anchor Ranch was so idyllic, why did she never tell me about it? Why did my father maintain a lifelong silence on the topic?

In 2021, I was invited by the Los Alamos Historical Society to visit the Pajarito Plateau. The historian showed me the pond on the site of Anchor Ranch where my father would have gone swimming and the foundations of cabins my grandparents built. I was shown records of phone calls (a luxury at the time), shopping lists and accounting records in my grandmother's loopy handwriting.

I still can't reconcile the evidence of their lives on the Pajarito Plateau with their later lives. But I did come away with a sense of the inscrutable spirit of the plateau, a mix of beauty and horror. I have also come to understand the power of secrecy.

Secrecy is a theme of "Oppenheimer." It was the bedrock of the Manhattan Project. It is also the blanket my father and grandmother wrapped around their lives on the Pajarito Plateau, leaving me to piece together their story and mine. I am still at it, trying to fill in the blanks left by their silence about that strange era and place.

Francesca Smithwick-Driver lives in Manhattan Beach, California. She is writing a memoir, "No One to Ask."

The problematic use of 'problematic' to shut down people with whom we disagree

By ROBIN ABCARIAN
Los Angeles Times

My first unpleasant encounter with the current meaning of the word "problematic" occurred a couple of years ago.

I was mingling with some twenty- and thirty-somethings at an outdoor birthday party in San Francisco. It was a bit chilly, as San Francisco usually is, but a distinct and quite different chill fell over my little conversation group as we began to discuss Ben Stiller's "Tropic Thunder," the hilarious (in my opinion) movie that spoofed Hollywood careerism and war movies.

I don't remember why, exactly, we were talking about a film that came out in 2008. But all these years later, I said, I was still laughing at Tom's Cruise surprising role as fat-fingered, balding studio boss Les Grossman, a filthy-mouthed bully who—it was rumored—was based on the producer Scott Rudin and/or Harvey Weinstein, legendary industry monsters who both happen to be Jewish.

One woman looked at me and said, "That role was problematic."

"But it was satire," I replied. "It was funny."

"It was still problematic," she said. "He was channeling Jewish stereotypes."

At that point, I thought it best not to mention one of the movie's other stars, Robert Downey Jr., who played a white Australian actor playing a Black American Vietnam war vet. In blackface.

Feeling wrongfully admonished, I changed the subject.

But ever since, I've wondered how the word "problematic," so vague, had become such an effective insult and shorthand for someone's (well, my) moral failure or insensitivity.

I plugged the word "problematic" into the Google Ngram Viewer, a website that shows patterns of word usage in English-language literature, and discovered that its use has soared in the last few decades and shows no signs of slowing.

But why?

In a 2021 Atlantic essay, Oxford political theory professor Teresa M. Bejan offered a possible answer:

"Academics like me love to describe things as 'problematic.' But what do we mean? We're not saying that the thing in question is unsolvable or even difficult. We're saying—or implying—that it is objectionable in some way, that it rests uneasily with our prior moral or political commitments. ... It relies on a subtle sort of bullying in place of mutual justification. It excludes, rather than explains."

Bingo.

I would suggest that the word "problematic" has evolved to its current charged usage because the phrase "politically incorrect," once used ironically by smug leftists, was hijacked by smug conservatives to denote rigid left-wing ideological conformity. According to the Ngram Viewer, the use of "politically correct" and "politically incorrect" has fallen dramatically in the last several years after surging in the years between 1980 and 1997. (That kind of cancellation is pretty much what happened to the word "liberal," when the late MAGA Republican Rush Limbaugh turned it into his favorite epithet.)

Back in 2016, when former President Trump was first running, Slate published an essay about the trouble with "problematic" and its tendency to obscure what's really being said.

"You don't often hear people saying that Donald Trump's latest rants about immigrants or women are problematic," wrote Haley Swenson. "Instead, his words are called racist, sexist, and dangerous. But when it comes to conversations about culture and representation, we apparently feel the need to undercut, obscure, and distance ourselves from our own arguments."

Several years before Trump began his political ascent, a high school student named Liat Kaplan started an anonymous Tumblr page called "Your Fave is Problematic," a less direct way of highlighting the problem with "problematic."

As Kaplan explained it years later in the New York Times, "The posts contained long lists of celebrities' regrettable (racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ethnophobic, ableist and so on) statements and actions—the stuff that gets people canceled these days."

With satisfaction, I've noticed at least the beginning of a backlash has been brewing against "problematic," and its snotty little cousin "deeply problematic."

The essayist Jill Filipovic said as much earlier this month when she confessed in the Atlantic that she regretted embracing the concept of "trigger warnings."

"Back then," she wrote, "I was convinced that such warnings were sometimes necessary to convey the seriousness of the topics at hand (the term deeply problematic appears a mortifying number of times under my byline)."

The other day, I watched "Tropic Thunder" again for the first time in years.

It trades on and pokes fun at stereotypes of Black people, white people, Asian people, Jewish people, actors, agents, studio heads, war heroes. I wonder if it would get green lighted today.

Personally, I found Cruise's star turn as Grossman just as hilarious and true as the first time I saw it, maybe even more so because his alleged inspirations—Rudin and Weinstein—have gotten their karmic comeuppance in the wake of the MeToo movement.

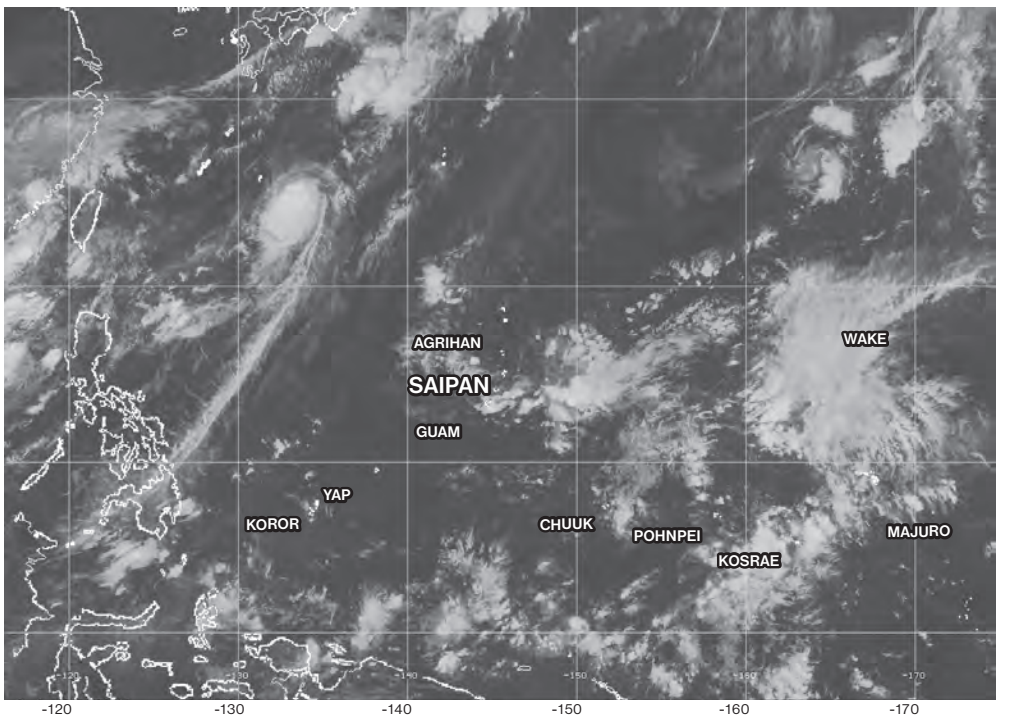
Offensive? Perhaps. Over the top? For sure. But problematic? Banish the thought.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Scattered showers. Partly sunny	A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny	A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny	A chance of showers. Partly sunny	A chance of showers. Partly sunny
87° 78°	87° 78°	87° 78°	86° 78°	86° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:35 AM, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite showing increasing clouds and showers moving in from the northeast. Ipan buoy and latest altimetry passes indicating combined seas 3 to 5 feet. Winds are light to gentle.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorm	87° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorm	83° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorm	85° / 80°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	86° / 76°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	86° / 76°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	85° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:04 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:05 AM	6:24 PM
Saturday	6:05 AM	6:23 PM
Sunday	6:05 AM	6:22 PM
Monday	6:05 AM	6:22 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:43 PM	-
Friday	12:04 AM	1:38 PM	-
Saturday	12:57 AM	2:31 PM	-
Sunday	1:50 AM	3:20 PM	-
Monday	2:44 AM	4:05 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	59° / 46°
Beijing	Sunny	90° / 66°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	90° / 81°
Honolulu	Thunderstorm	88° / 77°
London	Partly Cloudy	73° / 55°
Los Angeles	Sunny	79° / 67°
Manila	Thunderstorm	84° / 77°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	64° / 55°
Miami	Thunderstorm	88° / 80°
New York	Partly Cloudy	88° / 73°
Osaka	Thunderstorm	90° / 77°
Paris	Thunderstorm	81° / 59°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	84° / 70°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	81° / 61°
Salem	Thunderstorm	87° / 72°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	65° / 55°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	79° / 64°
Tokyo	Thunderstorm	86° / 73°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	92° / 77°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
6:35 AM	Low Tide	0.17
1:44 PM	High Tide	1.68
6:47 PM	Low Tide	1.26
11:46 PM	High Tide	1.78

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	7:10PM	7:55PM	1 up to Sep 4

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
PR 111	7:05AM	9:05AM	7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily up to Sep 4
UA183	7:20PM	9:10PM	Daily from Sep 5

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:20AM	6:30AM	1, 4, 5, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA112	5:15PM	6:05PM	1 up to Sep 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
PR110	11:40PM	5:35AM+1	6
UA184	11:50PM	5:50AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ702/625	12:05PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35PM	2:20AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

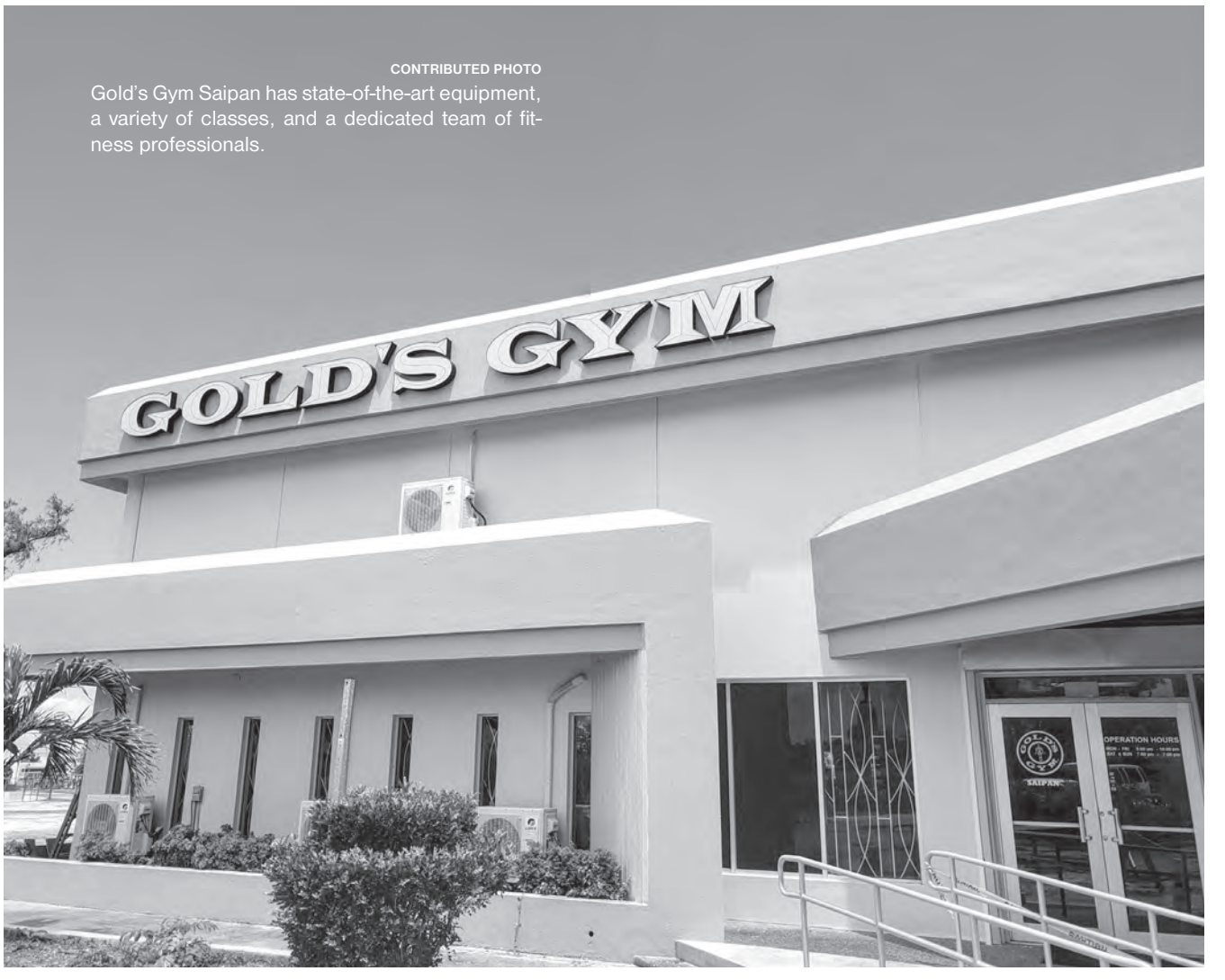
TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Gold's Gym welcomes new assistant manager

» Extends gratitude to outgoing assistant manager



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Gold's Gym Saipan has state-of-the-art equipment, a variety of classes, and a dedicated team of fitness professionals.

Gold's Gym Saipan is delighted to announce the appointment of Gerald Galang as its new assistant manager.

Cruz

Galang

Galang has a long-standing history with the company, having joined Gold's Gym in April 2014 and subsequently earning his NASM Certified Personal Trainer qualification in December 2015. His dedication, experience, and passion for fitness make him an invaluable addition to our team.

Galang's journey at Gold's Gym Saipan has been marked by hard work, perseverance, and commitment to the company's core values. He has consistently demonstrated his ability to excel in various roles within the organization, making him a natural fit for his new position as assistant manager. This appointment comes as a result of a recent vacancy in Gold's Gym's management team, and the company has the utmost confidence that Galang will excel in this role.

General manager Tyce Mister expressed his enthusiasm for Galang's promotion, stating, "Gerald is a great asset to Gold's Gym Saipan, and we look forward to working with him in his new capacity. He is trustworthy, responsible, and well-respected by our team."

As Gold's Gym welcomed Galang to his new role, the company also bid farewell to outgoing assistant manager, Natalie Cruz. Cruz has been an integral part of the Gold's Gym Saipan family for over 13 years, contributing her dedication, hard work, and enthusiasm to the gym. Her departure marks the end of an era, and she will be greatly missed by both members and the Gold's Gym community. The company extends its heartfelt thanks to Cruz for her unwavering commitment and wishes her the very best in all her future endeavors.

Gold's Gym Saipan remains committed to providing top-quality fitness experiences to our valued members. With Galang stepping into his new role, the company is confident in its ability to continue delivering exceptional service and fostering a supportive fitness environment.

"Please join us in welcoming Gerald Galang as the new Assistant Manager of Gold's Gym Saipan. We are excited about the future and the positive impact he will undoubtedly bring to our team," said Mister.

For further information or media inquiries, contact Mister, at info@goldsgym-saipan@gmail.com and (670) 233-4000.

Gold's Gym Saipan is a leading fitness facility committed to helping individuals achieve their potential through fitness. With state-of-the-art equipment, a variety of classes, and a dedicated team of fitness professionals, Gold's Gym Saipan provides a welcoming and motivating environment for people of all fitness levels. ***(PR)***

US steps toward forcing recall of 52M air bag inflators

DETROIT (AP)—The U.S. government is taking a big step toward forcing a defiant Tennessee company to recall 52 million air bag inflators that could explode, hurl shrapnel and injure or kill people.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on Tuesday said it has made an initial decision that the inflators made by ARC Automotive Inc., and under license by another company, are defective. The agency scheduled a public hearing for Oct. 5, a required step before deciding to seek a court-ordered recall.

In May the agency asked ARC to recall the inflators, which it says are responsible for at least seven injuries and two deaths in the U.S. and Canada since 2009. But ARC has refused to issue a full-scale recall, setting the stage for the possible court fight.

Messages were left Tuesday seeking comment from ARC. The company maintains that no safety defect exists, that NHTSA's demand is based on a hypothesis rather than technical conclusions, and that the agency has no authority to order a parts manufacturer to announce recalls.

"These air bag inflators may rupture when the vehicle's air bag is commanded to deploy, causing metal debris to be forcefully ejected into the passenger compartment of the vehicle," NHTSA wrote in an initial decision document. "A rupturing air bag inflator poses an unreasonable risk of serious injury or death to vehicle occupants."

NHTSA wants ARC to recall inflators in driver and passenger front air bags from at least a dozen automakers. Neither ARC nor the auto industry has released a full list of vehicle models with the kind of air bag inflators that have exploded. But at least 25 million of the 284 million vehicles on U.S. roads are believed to contain them.

Owners of vehicles made by at least a dozen auto brands—Chevrolet, Buick, GMC, Ford, Toyota, Stellantis, Volkswagen, Audi, BMW, Porsche, Hyundai and Kia—are left to wonder anxiously whether their vehicles contain driver or front passenger inflators made by ARC.

Though ARC is resisting a full-scale recall, automakers have conducted seven smaller recalls of inflators since 2017 that were attributed to isolated manufacturing problems. Those recalls included one that General Motors announced in May involving nearly 1 million vehicles. Ultimately, automakers are responsible for the recalls.

Initially NHTSA said that an estimated 67 million inflators should be recalled, but it revised the number to 52 million due to manufacturer responses in its investigation that over-counted the number, the agency said in documents issued Tuesday.

NHTSA contends that byproducts from welding during manufacturing can clog a vent inside the inflator canister that is designed to let gas escape to quickly fill air bags in a crash. In the defective products, pressure can build to the point where the canister is blown apart.

The inflators that NHTSA seeks to recall are from before 2018, when ARC finished installing scopes to monitor welding byproducts and the vents. NHTSA said in April that it was unaware of any explosions involving inflators that were manufactured after the scopes were installed.

ARC, acquired in 2016 by Chinese real estate developer Yinyi Group, has said in letters to the government that it can't state for sure whether its inflators might rupture again.

"Even with appropriate industry standards and efforts by manufacturers to minimize the risks of failures, the manufacturing processes may not completely eliminate the risk of occasional or isolated failures," ARC wrote.

The company further argued that the federal motor vehicle safety act "does not require vehicles and equipment to never experience a failure in the field. Rather the Safety Act seeks to protect the public against unreasonable risks."

United Airlines says outage not cybersecurity issue

By DAVID KOENIG
AP AIRLINES WRITER

United Airlines said Tuesday that a software update triggered a glitch that forced it to halt departures nationwide, briefly crippling one of the nation's biggest carriers on a busy travel day.

Federal officials said United crews had been unable to contact airline dispatchers through normal means.

"A software update caused a widespread slowdown in United's technology systems," United said in a statement. The airline said it was not a cybersecurity issue.

The Federal Aviation Administration, which runs the nation's airspace, said United asked it to stop the airline's departures nationwide. The FAA said the issue was limited to United and its subsidiaries.

The ground stop—it did not affect planes already in the air, United said—lasted a little more than an hour.

By late afternoon Tuesday on the East Coast, United had canceled only seven flights, well below its average of about 16 per day over the busy Labor Day weekend, according to figures from tracking service FlightAware.

However, more than 350 United flights were delayed—13% of the carrier's schedule, far more than rivals American, Delta and Southwest—on a day that many holiday vacationers were expected to fly home.

Southwest Airlines had a similar outage in April that grounded all departing flights for about an hour and caused more than 2,000 flights to be late.

The FAA caused all U.S. departures to be halted briefly in January when a system used to alert pilots to safety hazards failed. The agency blamed a contractor that it said accidentally deleted files while synchronizing the alert system and its backup.

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, who has criticized airlines for flight problems and other issues over the past year, posted Tuesday that the FAA was "receiving more information about the cause and scope of the issue, and DOT will make sure (United) meets its obligations to affected passengers."

The FAA is part of Buttigieg's Department of Transportation.

Nation

Biden-Trump rematch on horizon in '24, whether voters like it or not

NEW YORK (AP)—The end of Labor Day weekend would typically mark the start of a furious sprint to the Iowa caucuses as candidates battle for their party's presidential nomination. But as the 2024 campaign comes into greater focus, the usual frenzy is yielding to a sense of inevitability.

Among Republicans, Donald Trump is dominating the primary field, outpacing rivals with resumes as governors, diplomats and entrepreneurs that would normally prove compelling. The former president's strength comes despite—or perhaps because of—multiple criminal indictments that threaten to overshadow any serious debate about the future of the country. And for now, the tens of millions of dollars that Republican rivals are pouring into the race are doing little to diminish Trump's stature, fueling concerns among his GOP critics who fear the primary is essentially over before it begins.

As one troubled front-runner tightens his grip on the Republican nomination, President Joe Biden is on a glide path to victory on the Democratic side. The 80-year-old incumbent is facing only token opposition for the Democratic nomination despite concerns about his age and performance from many within his own party.

Whether voters like it or not, a Trump-Biden rematch may be on the horizon, raising the prospect of a deeply uncertain election season that only intensifies the nation's political divide. Already, Trump is skipping his party's presidential debates and his court appearances are sometimes drawing more attention than his campaign stops. And Biden has barely begun to campaign as he grapples with questions about his age and his son's legal challenges.

AP

Elizabeth Allin, bottom center left, and Gideon Lett sit in a convertible while watching President Donald Trump, on left of video screen, and Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden speak during a Presidential Debate Watch Party at Fort Mason Center in San Francisco, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020.

"I just can't imagine things markedly changing. So, it appears that past is prologue," California Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, said in an interview, praising Biden's record of achievement while warning his party against underestimating Trump's political strength.

Newsom said concerns about Biden's age "are fair game and the White House knows it."

"But if age equals results," he went on, "I'm looking forward to his 85th birthday."

On the Republican side, dread is building among some donors and party leaders who hoped conservative voters would move past Trump given the the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol he inspired and his serious legal challenges.

"A Trump-Biden rematch would be a disaster for the country. I'm very depressed about it," said Bobbie Kilberg, a prominent Republican donor who is supporting former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie. She said it's "scary" that so many voters in her party continue to support the former president. "I refuse to believe that Trump is our inevitable nominee."

There is time for the 2024 landscape to shift.

Four months remain before the first votes are cast in the Iowa caucuses and the general election is more than a year away. And recent history has plenty of examples of overlooked and seemingly overmatched candidates who proved the conventional wisdom wrong. Both Trump and Biden are among them.

There are also significant variables.

Abortion continues to scramble elections—even in GOP strongholds like Kansas, Kentucky and Ohio—as voters reject Republican efforts to restrict access to the procedure. A greater backlash is possible as the courts review access to a commonly used abortion pill.

And Trump is facing 91 felony charges in criminal proceedings unfolding in Washington, New York, South Florida and Atlanta. They involve everything from his handling of classified information to his efforts to overturn the 2020 election to orchestrating hush money payments to a porn actor.

The former president could be a convicted felon before the general election is decided next November. Still, party leaders — including most of his Republican primary opponents — have vowed to support him even if he's convicted. And nothing in the Constitution bars felons from assuming the presidency.

Tens of thousands clean up and head home after Burning Man floods

RENO, Nev. (AP)—The traffic jam leaving the Burning Man festival eased up considerably Tuesday as the exodus from the mud-caked Nevada desert entered another day following massive rain that left tens of thousands of partygoers stranded for days.

A pair of brothers from Arizona who took their 67-year-old mother with them to Burning Man for the first time spent 11 hours into early Tuesday morning just getting out of the festival site about 110 miles (177 kilometers) north of Reno.

"It was a perfect, typical Burning Man weather until Friday—then the rain started coming down hard," said Phillip Martin, 37. "Then it turned into Mud Fest."

Event organizers began letting traffic flow out on the main road Monday afternoon—even as they urged attendees to delay their exit to help ease traffic. The wait time to exit Black Rock City was about 3.5 hours as of Tuesday at about 5 p.m., according to the official Burning Man Traffic account on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Roughly 36,000 people remained at the site Tuesday by mid-afternoon, organizers said.

The annual celebration of free spirits in one of the most remote places in America launched on a San Francisco beach in 1986 and has since grown in size and popularity. Nearly 80,000 artists, musicians and activists visit the Black Rock Desert every year to build a city of colorful themed camps, decorated art cars and guerilla theatrics in preparation for the ceremonial burnings of a towering, faceless effigy and a temple dedicated to the dead.

Most attendees travel to the stark desert for a week to express themselves with music and art, commune with nature, or "find themselves." Others visit the ancient lake bottom for a psychedelic party full of hallucinogens and nudity before the burning of the wooden effigy.

The event this year began Aug. 27 and was scheduled to end Monday morning, with attendees breaking down camps and cleaning up—until the rains came.

After more than a half-inch (1.3 centimeters) of rain fell Friday, flooding turned the playa to foot-deep mud—closing roads and forcing burners to lean on each other for help.

Burning Man emphasizes self-sufficiency, and many burners arrive in Black Rock Desert with limited supplies, expecting to face challenges in the form of brutal heat, dust storms—or torrential rains.

Disruptions are part of the event's recent history: Dust storms forced organizers to temporarily close entrances to the festival in 2018, and the event was twice canceled altogether during the pandemic.

Mark Fromson, 54, who goes by the name "Stuffy" on the playa, had been staying in an RV, but the rains forced him to find shelter at another camp, where fellow burners provided him food and cover. Another principle of Burning Man, he said, centers on the unconditional giving of gifts with no expectation of receiving one.

After sunset Friday, Fromson set off barefoot through the muck for a long trek back to his vehicle—the dense playa suddenly a thick clay that clung to his feet and legs. The challenge, he said, was the mark of a "good burn."

"Best burn yet," he said. "The old, crusty burners who have been out there for 40 years would just laugh at us with all the creature comforts we come onto the playa with."

The road closures came just before the first of the ceremonial fires were scheduled to begin Saturday night. Shortly thereafter, the fires themselves were postponed as authorities worked to reopen exit routes by the end of the Labor Day weekend.

Proud Boys' Tarrio gets record 22 years in prison for Jan. 6 seditious conspiracy

WASHINGTON (AP)—Former Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrio was sentenced Tuesday to 22 years in prison for orchestrating a failed plot to keep Donald Trump in power after the Republican lost the 2020 election, capping the case with the stiffest punishment that has been handed down yet for the U.S. Capitol attack.

Tarrio, 39, pleaded for leniency before the judge imposed the prison term topping the 18-year sentences given to Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes and one-time Proud Boys leader Ethan Nordean for seditious conspiracy and other convictions stemming from the Jan. 6, 2021, riot.

Tarrio, who led the neofacist group as it became a force in mainstream Republican circles, lowered his head after the sentence was imposed, then squared his shoulders. He raised his hand and made a "V" gesture with his fingers as he was led out of the courtroom in orange jail garb.

His sentencing comes as the Justice Department prepares to put Trump on trial at the same courthouse in Washington on charges that the then-president illegally schemed to cling to power that he knew had been stripped away by voters.

Rising to speak before the sentence was handed down, Tarrio called Jan. 6 a "national embarrassment," and apologized to the police officers who defended the Capitol and the lawmakers who fled in fear. His voice cracked as he said he let down his family and vowed that he is done with politics.

"I am not a political zealot. Inflicting harm or changing the results of the election was not my goal," Tarrio said. "Please show me mercy," he said, adding, "I ask you that you not take my 40s from me."

U.S. District Judge Timothy Kelly, who was appointed to the bench by Trump, said Tarrio was motivated by "revolutionary zeal" to lead the conspiracy that resulted in "200 men, amped up for battle, encircling the Capitol." Noting that Tarrio had not previously shown any remorse publicly for his crimes, the judge said a stiff punishment was necessary to deter future political violence.

"It can't happen again. It can't happen again," the judge repeated.

Tarrio and three lieutenants were convicted in May of seditious conspiracy and other crimes after a months-long trial that served as a vivid reminder of the violent chaos fueled by Trump's lies about the election that helped inspire right-wing extremists like the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers.

Prosecutors had sought 33 years behind bars for Tarrio, describing him as the ringleader of a plot to use violence to shatter the cornerstone of American democracy and overturn the election victory by Joe Biden, a Democrat, over Trump, the Republican incumbent.

Prosecutor Conor Mulroe told the judge that the Proud Boys came dangerously close to succeeding in their plot—and noted that "it didn't take rifles or explosives."

"There was a very real possibility we were going to wake up on Jan. 7 in a full-blown constitutional crisis," Mulroe said, with "300 million Americans having no idea who the next president would be or how it would be decided."

Asia

Myanmar won't be allowed to take over ASEAN leadership

AP

From left to right, Philippine's President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Thailand's Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sarun Charoensuwan, Vietnam's Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Laotian Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone, Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Manet, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, and East Timor's Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao hold hands for a family photo before the start of the retreat session at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit in Jakarta, Indonesia, Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023.

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Southeast Asian leaders decided Tuesday that Myanmar won't take over the rotating leadership of their regional bloc as scheduled in 2026, in the latest blow to efforts by its ruling generals to gain international recognition after violently seizing power in 2021.

Western governments led by the United States have condemned the Myanmar army's ouster of Aung San Suu Kyi's democratically elected government in 2021 and have demanded her immediate release from yearslong detention along with other officials. Resistance to the military takeover has escalated into what some U.N. experts have described as a civil war.

The Philippines agreed to take over the regional bloc's chairmanship in 2026 at an ASEAN summit hosted by Indonesia on Tuesday, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said in a statement, citing what he told fellow leaders in the closed-door meetings.

"It is my pleasure to announce that the Philippines is ready to take the helm and chair ASEAN in 2026," Marcos told his ASEAN counterparts in Jakarta, the statement said.

An official ASEAN statement issued Tuesday night confirmed the decision to hand the chair to the Philippines in 2026 and affirmed the group's commitment to a five-point plan for restoring peace and stability in Myanmar.

Marcos did not explain why Myanmar lost the prestigious yearlong ASEAN chairmanship, but two ASEAN diplomats told The Associated Press that it was related to the continuing civil strife in the country and fears that the bloc's relations with the United States and the European Union, among others, might be undermined because of their nonrecognition of the military-led government in Myanmar.

The diplomats spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the delicate issue publicly.

The ASEAN leaders' statement on Myanmar stressed the desire to work with the generals to end the country's crisis, especially in the context of the five-point plan which Myanmar accepted in 2021 but has largely failed to implement.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Pakistani premier claims US military equipment left behind in Afghanistan now in militant hands

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan's caretaker prime minister claimed on Monday that U.S. military equipment left behind during the American withdrawal from Afghanistan has fallen into militant hands and ultimately made its way to the Pakistani Taliban. The equipment—which includes a wide variety of items, from night vision goggles to firearms—is now "emerging as a new challenge" for Islamabad as it has enhanced the fighting capabilities of the Pakistani Taliban, Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said. The Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan or TTP, have over the past months intensified attacks on Pakistan's security forces. They are a separate militant group but an ally of the Afghan Taliban.

Floods from Haikui kill 2 in China's Fujian province

BEIJING (AP)—At least two people have been killed and thousands forced to evacuate by floods brought by tropical storm Haikui in China's southeastern coastal Fujian province, local authorities reported Wednesday.Schools were closed and flights suspended, while more than 30,000 people were moved to safety. Two firefighters died and one police officer is missing after flood waters carried away a fire engine on a rescue mission, state media reported. Haikui swept across Taiwan as a typhoon earlier this week, injuring dozens and leaving thousands of people without power. It weakened to a tropical storm when it made landfall in Fujian, but continued to bring record-breaking levels of rainfall. The worst affected area lies between the coast and inland mountains and is particularly prone to flooding, leading many over the decades to migrate to other parts of China or move overseas.

World

Russia: Southeast Ukraine now main focus of fighting

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—The Zaporizhzhia region of southeast Ukraine has become the most recent hot spot for battles in the 18-month war, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said Tuesday, as Kyiv's forces press ahead with their counteroffensive.

Shoigu told Russian military officers that Ukraine has brought up reserve brigades there that were trained by Kyiv's Western allies. He offered no evidence for his claim, which could not be independently verified.

Fighting in the southeast could be one of the keys to the war. If Russian defenses there collapse, Ukrainian forces could push southward toward the coast and potentially split Russian forces into two.

Shoigu's assertion was corroborated in part by other reports and assessments of Ukraine's three-month-old effort to drive out the Kremlin's troops.

The Institute for the Study of War, a think tank, citing geolocated footage, said Tuesday that Ukrainian light infantry has advanced beyond some of the anti-tank ditches and dense minefields that make up Russia's layered defenses in Zaporizhzhia.

However, it said it was unable to state that the defense was fully breached, because no Ukrainian heavy armor has been witnessed in the area.

It is in the south that the Ukrainian brigades have made most recent battlefield gains as the counteroffensive inches forward under heavy fire.

Since the grinding counteroffensive began about three months ago, Ukraine has advanced 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) in the Zaporizhzhia region, Ukrainian officials claim. Troops surmounted dense Russian fortifications last week to retake the village of Robotyne. That was Ukraine's first tactically significant victory in that part of the country.

Ukrainian forces have made more progress in that area and were fortifying captured positions on Tuesday morning, according to Pavlo Kovalchuk, spokesman of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Neither side's battlefield claims could be verified.

If Ukrainians progress just 15 kilometers (9 miles) from Robotyne, they could come within firing range of Russia's east-west transport routes and potentially weaken Moscow's combat capabilities, military observers say.

Ukrainian forces are advancing without air cover, making their progress harder and slower, while Russia has launched its own push in the northeast to pin down Ukrainian forces and prevent them being redeployed to the south.

Ukraine has adapted its counteroffensive tactics in recent weeks, moving from attempts to bludgeon its way through Russian lines using Western-supplied armor to better-planned tactical attacks that make incremental gains, according to the Royal United Services Institute, a think tank.

"However, this approach is slow, with approximately 700–1,200 meters (2,300-4,000 feet) of progress every five days, allowing Russian forces to reset," it said in an assessment Monday.

UN official: Humanitarian crisis, massive sexual violence wracking eastern Congo

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The humanitarian situation in conflict-wracked eastern Congo has deteriorated alarmingly in the past 18 months with 8 million people in urgent need of assistance and women and girls subjected to sexual violence on a massive scale—just in three provinces, a senior U.N. official said Tuesday.

Edem Wosornu, the U.N. humanitarian office's operations director who just returned from a trip to Congo with emergency directors from U.N. agencies and humanitarian organizations, said that what they saw and heard "was shocking, heartbreaking and sobering."

She said the situation in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri provinces "is frankly the worst situation we have ever seen," and that's in a country where more than 26 million people are hungry and need food.

Wosornu told a news conference that gender-based violence is "being perpetrated on a massive and distressing scale" with more than 35,000 survivors seeking access to treatment and services after attacks in just the first six months of 2023 in the three provinces. Given that only a fraction of survivors report gender-based violence, she said, "the number is likely to be higher."

Conflict has been simmering for decades in mineral-rich eastern Congo, where Wosornu said more than 130 armed groups are fighting mainly for control of land and mines though some groups are trying to protect their communities.

Fighting spiked in late 2021 when M23, a rebel group linked to neighboring Rwanda which was largely dormant for nearly a decade, resurfaced and started capturing territory. M23 rose to prominence in 2012 when its fighters seized Goma, eastern Congo's largest city on the border with Rwanda.

Recently, attacks by the Allied Democratic Forces, which is believed to have ties to the Islamic State extremist group, have also spiked along with intercommunal violence.

Gabriella Waaijman, global humanitarian director at London-based Save the Children International who was also on the trip, said Congo has the highest number of grave violations against children and.one of the highest number of displaced people in the world — and the number of internally displaced people grew by a further one million this year.

The scale of suffering and insufficient funding have left humanitarian workers in the impossible situation every day of deciding whether to prioritize water, shelter or medical support for the constant stream of newly displaced people. And one result of the overwhelming needs is that thousands and thousands of children aren't able to go to school, she said.

The U.N. appealed for $2.3 billion for humanitarian assistance for Congo this year but has received just one-third, $764 million, Wosornu said, and it has been able to help just 1.4 million people, "a fraction of the number of people in need."

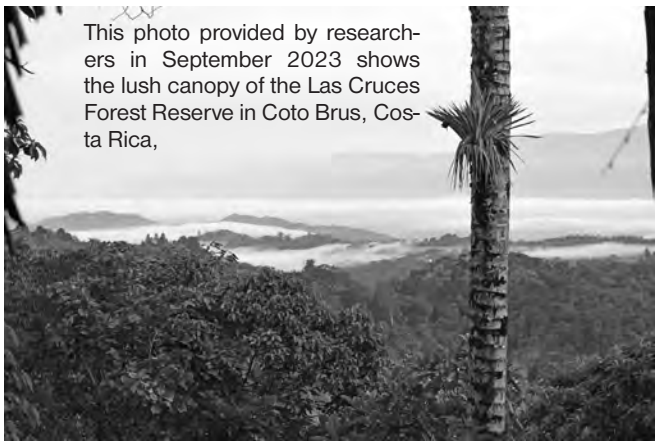
Environment

Farms with natural landscape features provide sanctuary for some Costa Rica rainforest birds

By CHRISTINA LARSON
AP Science Writer

AP PHOTOS

This photo provided by researchers shows a royal flycatcher bird in Las Cruces Biological Station in Coto Brus, Costa Rica in March 2018.



This photo provided by researchers in September 2023 shows the lush canopy of the Las Cruces Forest Reserve in Coto Brus, Costa Rica,

This photo provided by researchers shows a white-tipped sicklebill (Eutoxeres aquila) in San Vito, Costa Rica, in February 2018. Though a forest specialist,

Small farms with natural landscape features such as shade trees, hedgerows and tracts of intact forest provide a refuge for some tropical bird populations, according to an 18-year study in Costa Rica.

For almost two decades, ornithologist James Zook has been collecting detailed records on nearly 430 tropical bird species found on small farms, plantations and undisturbed forests in the country.

While birds thrive the most in undisturbed rainforests, Zook said some species usually found in forests can establish populations in "diversified farms" that partially mimic a natural forest environment.

"How you farm matters," said Nicholas Hendershot, a Stanford University ecologist and co-author of the study published Monday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

"In these diversified farms, you see growth over the long term in bird species with specialized needs," such as safe and shady nooks to build nests and a variety of food sources, Hendershot said.

That trend was "in stark contrast to what we saw in intensive agriculture," or monocrop pineapple and banana plantations, he said.

The findings may seem intuitive, but Natalia Ocampo-Penuela, a University of California, Santa Cruz conservation ecologist not involved in the study, said it's extremely rare to have detailed long-term data from tropical regions to show that varied farming landscapes can sustain some forest bird populations.

"With 18 years of data, you can show the species is persisting in that area, not simply passing by," she said.

Three-quarters of the 305 species found in diversified farms showed stable or growing populations over the time of study. These include the collared aracari, a small toucan-like bird, with a yellow chest and enormous beak, as well as several members of the manakin family — small brightly colored forest birds known for elaborate courtship dances.

"It's a huge contribution to have documented that some birds aren't just going there, but staying there and populations are growing," said Ruth Bennett, an ecologist at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, who was not involved in the research.

In battle against Amazon deforestation, Brazil offers cash rewards to municipalities

AP PHOTOS

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, holds a plaque demarcating Indigenous Lands, next to the President of the National Indigenous Foundation Joenia Wapichana, left, and the Minister of Indigenous Peoples Sonia Guajajara, during during ceremony to commemorate Amazon Day, in Brasilia, Brazil, Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023.

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)— In a bid to slow deforestation in the Amazon, Brazil announced Tuesday that it will provide financial support to municipalities that have reduced deforestation rates the most.

During the country´s Amazon Day, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva also signed the creation of two Indigenous territories that total 207,000 hectares (511,000 acres)—over two times the size of New York City—and of a network of conservation areas next to the Yanonami Indigenous Territory to act as a buffer against invaders, mostly illegal gold miners.

"The Amazon is in a hurry to survive the devastation caused by those few people who refuse to see the future, who in a few years cut down, burned, and polluted what nature took millennia to create," Lula said during a ceremony in Brasilia. "The Amazon is in a hurry to continue doing what it has always done, to be essential for life on Earth."

The new program will invest up to $120 million in technical assistance. The money will be allocated based on the municipality´s performance in reducing deforestation and fires, as measured by official satellite monitoring. A list of municipalities eligible for the funds will be published annually.

The resources must be invested in land titling, monitoring and control of deforestation and fires, and sustainable production.

The money will come from the Amazon Fund, which has received more than $1.2 billion, mostly from Norway, to help pay for sustainable development of the region. In February, the United States committed to a $50 million donation to the initiative. Two months later, President Joe Biden announced he would ask Congress for an additional $500 million, to be disbursed over five years.

The most critical municipalities are located along the arc of deforestation, a vast region along the southern part of the Amazon. This region is a stronghold of former far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, who favored agribusiness over forest preservation and lost the reelection last year.

"We believe that it's not enough to just put up a sign saying 'it's forbidden to do this or that. We need to be persuasive." Lula said, in a reference to his relationship with Amazon mayors and state governors.

Lula has promised zero net deforestation by 2030, although his term ends two years earlier. In the first seven months of his third term, there was a 42% drop in deforestation.

Brazil is the world's fifth-largest emitter of greenhouse gases, with almost 3% of global emissions, according to Climate Watch, an online platform managed by World Resources Institute. Almost half of these emissions come from deforestation. Under the 2015 Paris Agreement, Brazil committed to reducing carbon emissions by 37% by 2025 and 43% by 2030.

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva makes his speech during a ceremony to commemorate Amazon Day, in Brasilia, Brazil, Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023.

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva speaks during a ceremony to commemorate Amazon Day, in Brasilia, Brazil, Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023.

Life & Style

New book details Biden-Obama frictions

WASHINGTON (AP)—A new book about Joe Biden portrays the president as someone whose middle-class upbringing helped foster a resentment of intellectual elitism that shaped his political career and sometimes caused strain with his onetime boss, Harvard-educated Barack Obama.

» Says Harris sought roles 'away from the spotlight'

Biden, who spent eight years as Obama's vice president, told a friend that Obama couldn't even curse properly, according to "The Last Politician: Inside Joe Biden's White House and the Struggle for America's Future."

Released Tuesday and written by Franklin Foer, a staff writer for The Atlantic, the book says Biden said Obama was unable to deliver a "f—-you" with "the right elongation of vowels and the necessary hardness of consonants; it was how they must curse in the ivory tower."

Now, as the president runs for reelection, the early frontrunner among Republicans is former President Donald Trump, whose supporters can sometimes resent the perceived elitism of Washington's political class—suggesting some overlap with Biden.

The anecdote also may resonate with Democrats. Ardent supporters of both Biden and Obama fondly recall the then-vice president telling Obama in a private aside that was captured on a hot mic, "This is a big f—-ing deal," during the signing ceremony for Obama's signature health care law in 2010.

Foer's book offers a deep examination of Biden's first two years in office, which the author describes as encompassing a lot of "flailing" before the president began to cement his legacy through signature policy achievements and "creative diplomacy" that helped rally the world behind Ukraine in the face of Russia's invasion.

The 80-year-old Biden continues to face questions about his age, and Foer calls it "striking" that Biden attends few meetings or public events before 10 a.m. In private, Biden would "occasionally admit to friends he felt tired," the book says.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre was asked last week by a reporter citing an early excerpt from Foer's book if personal fatigue might help explain why Biden's morning schedule was often light. She responded, "That's a ridiculous assumption to make."

Jean-Pierre referred back to that exchange during her briefing with reporters at the White House on Tuesday, and provided updated comment, saying that administration officials had now "seen the context of the excerpt." She said the book was actually praising Biden for helping to push major legislation through Congress and unify global support around Ukraine.

It "seemed to be making the opposite overall point about how the value of his experience and wisdom resulted in rallying the free world against authoritarianism," she said.

Jean-Pierre also said "there's gonna be a range, always, a range of books that are about every administration" that would feature "a variety of claims."

"That's not unusual. That happens all the time," she said. "And we're not going to litigate here."

Foer's book also describes struggles by Vice President Kamala Harris to carve out a role for herself as Biden's No. 2 that have been well-documented previously. But Foer suggests Harris may have hurt her own cause in that area, initially asking to be in charge of relations with Scandinavia because it was "away from the spotlight."

The book reports that the vice president was initially excited about helping the administration tackle the root causes of immigration that have seen so many Central American migrants seeking asylum arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border—but that she eventually began to accept conventional wisdom that it was a thankless assignment.

Foer's book says Biden tried to treat Harris more respectfully than he felt Obama often had treated him as vice president, calling her "the vice president" instead of "my vice president." But, during his early days in office, as Biden was convening his team to combat the coronavirus pandemic, Biden joked that the nation's top infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, should sit in the vice president's seat.

Joe Jonas files for divorce from Sophie Turner

MIAMI (AP)—Joe Jonas filed for divorce from Sophie Turner on Tuesday after four years of marriage and two children.

The 34-year-old Jonas Brothers singer filed to end his marriage with the 27-year-old star of "Game of Thrones" and "X-Men" actor in Florida's Miami-Dade County Court.

The filing says "the marriage between the parties is irretrievably broken."

Turner and Jonas married in a secretive ceremony at a Las Vegas wedding chapel on May 1, 2019, after the Billboard Music Awards. Country duo Dan + Shay performed at the wedding.

The couple had a daughter, Willa, in 2020, and last year had another daughter whose name they have not made public.

Jonas is seeking joint custody of the girls, according to the divorce documents. The two had a prenuptial-agreement that Jonas expects will be enforced, according to the filing.

Representatives for Jonas and Turner did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

AP

Joe Jonas, left, and Sophie Turner appear at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party on March 12, 2023, at the Wallis Annenberg Center in Beverly Hills, Calif.

The couple said in interviews that mutual friends had long wanted to introduce them when they began talking via Instagram direct messages in 2016. They met in person in October of that year and were dating each other exclusively by December. They announced their engagement in October 2017.

Turner, who is from Northampton, England, played Sansa Stark for eight seasons on HBO's "Game of Thrones" and played Jean Grey in 2016's "X-Men: Apocalypse" and 2019's "Dark Phoenix.

The Arizona-born Jonas came to fame with brothers Nick and Kevin in a band starting in 2005 and subsequent Disney Channel series. They released their sixth studio album in May and are currently on a tour of U.S

Hollywood strike stings Warner Bros., profit outlook for year trimmed by as much as $500M

Warner Bros. Discovery is cutting its profit expectations for the year, saying it will likely incur costs as high as $500 million tied to the ongoing Hollywood writers' and actors' strike.

The U.S. film and television industries remain paralyzed by the dual strikes. The writers strike began in May and the actors joined them on July 14.

Warner Bros. Discovery owns HBO and Max, CNN, TNT and a host of other entertainment outlets, including DC Comics.

The company said in a regulatory filing that it now expects 2023 adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization to be between $10.5 billion to $11 billion, down from $11 billion to $11.5 billion.

"While (Warner Bros. Discovery) is hopeful that these strikes will be resolved soon, it cannot predict when the strikes will ultimately end. With both guilds still on strike today, the company now assumes the financial impact to (Warner Bros. Discovery) of these strikes will persist through the end of 2023," the company stated.

Shares of Warner Bros.. based in New York City, rose about 2% Tuesday. ***(AP)***

Teens build relationship amid multiple challenges

DEAR ABBY: I'm in a relationship with someone younger. I'm 17, and he's 15. When I first met him, I was told he was a junior. We were close friends and have been through so much together, good and bad, and we've now been in a six-month relationship.

We don't have bad intentions because we are waiting for marriage before having sex. I have struggled with depression and anxiety, but he makes me happier than I have ever been. He's the man I have been asking God for. He treats me like a princess. I have no doubt in my mind that he could be The One.

The problem is, his parents don't like the age difference. My parents don't have a problem with it because their age gap is the same. They are also very strict, and they will agree only if his parents agree. His parents have a bigger age gap but still are iffy about us. What I don't understand is why I can't be happy with him without our parents thinking we're going to have sex without thinking about consequences.

When we are together, we forget about the age gap. How do I make our parents understand? Must we break up for the sake of our parents when I could fall into another depression? I don't want to go back to where I was. I can't lose him. Please help.

HAPPY GIRL NOW

DEAR GIRL: You don't have to lose this boyfriend, but you may have to postpone him. In the meantime, it's important that you receive help for your depression and anxiety because it's unfair to your boyfriend to make your happiness his responsibility. Your happiness should not be dependent on another person.

If your parents are unaware of your mental health struggles, tell them so they can assist you in getting professional help if necessary. If they cannot do that, talk about it with a counselor at your school.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, "Eli," and I bought a beautiful white Labrador puppy, "Sasha," two years ago. I live with him and my future father-in-law, "Harry," at his father's house. Eli's father is basically a man-child. Harry feeds Sasha table scraps, and even though we have asked him to stop, he doesn't. He laughs and says the food won't hurt her. I think he is being very disrespectful.

The extra food is making Sasha gain weight. We are worried about her health, but Harry doesn't care. We don't have enough money to move out yet. Harry is home a lot during the day when my boyfriend and I are working. We pay all of Sasha's vet and food bills. I'm not sure what to do about this. I would appreciate any advice you can give me.

PET PROJECT IN NEW YORK

DEAR PET PROJECT: If possible, start asking friends or relatives if they would be willing to have Sasha stay with them during the day while you and Eli are working. Obesity isn't healthy for canines or humans, and regardless of Harry's motivation, he should not be stuffing your puppy after you have asked him not to.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

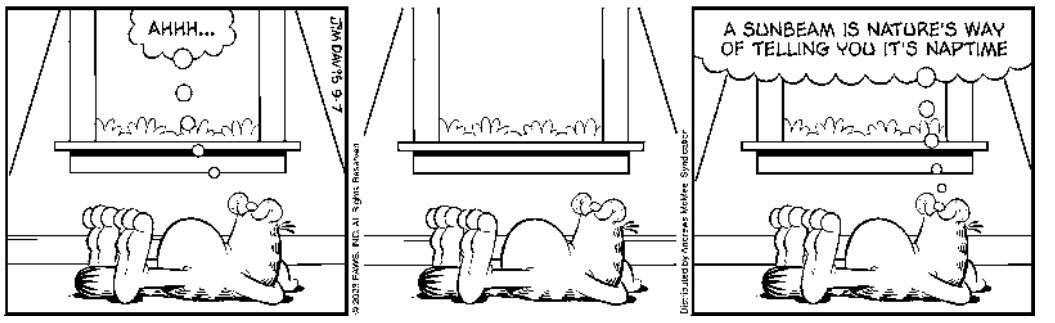
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

LET GO OF ME, YA BIG GALOOT! WHY DON'T YOU PICK ON SOMEBODY YOUR OWN SIZE?!
They'd hit back.
..I GUESS THAT HAS A CERTAIN UNETHICAL LOGIC TO IT...

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



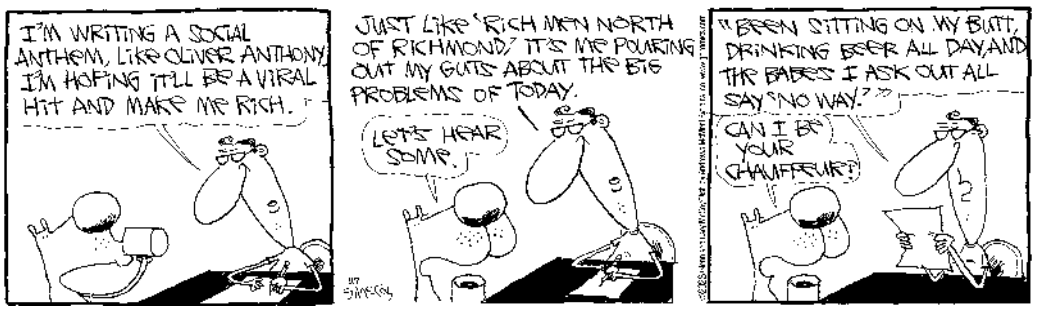
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

HELLO, GARAGE WEIGHTS. WE MEET AGAIN.
WHY DIDN'T YOU STICK WITH US THE LAST TIME, DUDE? YOU'D BE IN CRAZY SHAPE BY NOW.
OKAY. I DON'T NEED YOUR ATTITUDE. SO, JUST... BE HEAVY.
HE'S ARGUING WITH THE WEIGHTS.
OH, GOOD! ARGUING BURNS CALORIES.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


I'M WRITING A SOCIAL ANTHEM, LIKE OLIVER ANTHONY. I'M HOPING IT'LL BE A VIRAL HIT AND MAKE ME RICH.
JUST LIKE 'RICH MEN NORTH OF RICHMOND' IT'S ME POURING OUT MY GUTS ABOUT THE BIG PROBLEMS OF TODAY.
LET'S HEAR SOME.
"BEEN SITTING ON MY BUTT, DRINKING BEER ALL DAY, AND THE BABES I ASK OUT ALL SAY "NO WAY." "
CAN I BE YOUR CHAUFFEUR?

CROSSWORD

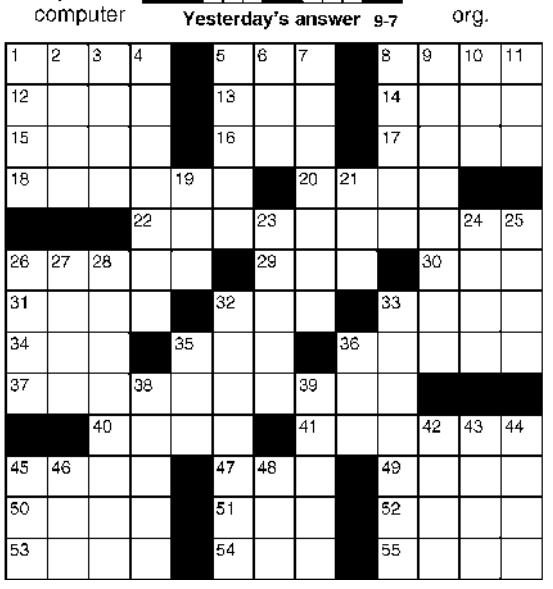
By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Dance move
5 Long. crosser
8 Excellent, in slang
12 Club in a Manilow hit
13 Journalist Tarbell
14 — fever (ailed)
15 Actor El-Masry
16 Slugger's need
17 Taxi alternative
18 Sweet drink
20 "I did it!"
22 Epiphanies
26 Lake of "Hairspray"
29 Cyclades isle
30 Comics cry
31 Tennis champ Arthur
32 Reply (Abbr.)
33 Early supercomputer
34 The Spartans' sch.
35 Pampering, for short
36 Motel units
37 Religious rites
40 Coffee-growing area of Hawaii
41 Will subject
45 Use a blowtorch
47 "Fresh Air" airer
49 Close
50 Frozen drink brand
51 Off-roader (Abbr.)
52 Thus
53 Hoo-ha
54 Low isle
55 Flag maker Betsy

DOWN
1 Read quickly
2 Heavy reading?
3 Grand tale
4 Experience, with "In"
5 Sign after Virgo
6 Oklahoma city
7 Bits of body art
8 Stuffy sort
9 Fiery pepper
10 Hydrocarbon suffix
11 Sailor
19 Sashimi fish
21 Mornings, briefly
23 Chop finely
24 Squad
25 "The — the limit!"
26 Runs (into)
27 "Insecure" actress Rae
28 Laughed a little
32 Fact book
33 "Yellowstone" star
35 Light brown
36 ACLU concerns
38 Wild West show
39 Brash
42 Aviation prefix
43 Labels
44 Love god
45 Humorist
46 Green prefix
48 School org.

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 9-7



STUMPED? For answers lo today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18÷ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Evan Rachel Wood, 36; Shannon Elizabeth, 50; Toby Jones, 57; Michael Emerson, 69.

Happy Birthday: A change will do you good. Whether you embark on an educational pursuit, travel or an activity that exhilarates you, it will trigger new goals and hopes for a better future. Getting out more and doing things that spark your imagination and excite you about life, love and happiness are favored. Focus on what's happening in your community and participate. Live life your way. Your numbers are 8, 12, 20, 26, 32, 34, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Pay attention to how you present yourself to the world. Make fitness, health and appeal your priorities. You will gain momentum and the type of attention that can help you get ahead. Believe in yourself, and so will those you encounter. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Think big, but live within your means. Don't let temptation get the best of you. Simplify your life instead of complicating matters. Find a way to use your skills to differentiate yourself from the competition. Protect your health and reputation. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Take the initiative to verify information before passing it along. Protect your reputation and position from anyone trying to dismantle what you have worked hard to achieve. Stick close to home and those you can trust. Home improvements are favored. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Simplify your life. Truth matters, and sticking to what you know and feel comfortable conveying will help eliminate stress and leave you free to follow your heart and do as you please. A unique way of handling your responsibilities will help you advance. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Work alone, and you'll get more done. Refuse to get involved in other people's affairs or put yourself in a compromising position. Focus on what's important to you, and avoid discussions that make you feel uncomfortable or that can jeopardize your reputation. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Concentrate on facts, learning and increasing your qualifications. Set high standards and carry yourself with confidence. Refuse to let someone's emotional blackmail and jealousy stand between you and what you want to achieve. Stand tall, be confident and don't fold under pressure. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Set the standard instead of living by someone else's rules. Do what's right for you and engage in activities that make you feel good about yourself. Trust your instincts, follow your heart and live passionately. Use your energy to make a difference. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Learn through observation and reach out to those who positively impact you or your life. Be part of the solution to eliminate the problems standing in your way. Reevaluate your life and you'll discover what makes you happy. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Let others know how you feel instead of agreeing to do things that don't appeal to you. It's time to do things your way. Put yourself first, love passionately and use your skills how you intend to use them. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Home is where the heart is, so making it work for you is vital. Consider what makes you happy and the changes that need to occur. Include the ones you love and you'll get support to make your dreams come true. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* What you decide to do matters. Start doing what's best for you. Create your happy place; it will be infectious to those around you. Put a smile on your face, a skip in your step and a robust mindset in place. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Don't share personal information or secrets. Focus on the changes that will improve your life and your relationships with others. Emotional manipulation and deception are apparent. Set standards, be honest with yourself and others, and request the same in return. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are gifted, supportive and flexible. You are complex and curious.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			4			8		
		2	9		3			5
8	7					1		9
7				2				
4		1				9	7	
	3					4	5	2
	8	7			1	5		4
				4	5		9	8
	4	9	6					

Difficulty: ★★★ 9/7

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	8	3	9	5	1	4	2	7
9	2	4	7	6	3	8	5	1
7	1	5	8	2	4	9	6	3
8	6	1	4	7	5	2	3	9
5	9	7	2	3	6	1	4	8
3	4	2	1	9	8	5	7	6
4	5	9	3	8	7	6	1	2
1	7	8	6	4	2	3	9	5
2	3	6	5	1	9	7	8	4

Difficulty: ★★★ 9/6

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

DISCOUNTS Solution: 8 letters

R	P	A	Y	M	E	N	T	T	E	A	C	H	E	R
E	E	R	R	A	L	L	O	D	S	T	O	R	E	E
B	E	C	O	E	C	A	S	H	I	E	R	T	T	D
A	Y	A	E	M	B	C	L	A	I	M	A	O	S	U
T	O	L	(L)	I	O	M	O	E	A	I	K	T	P	C
E	L	C	E	(A)	P	T	U	U	L	E	I	S	I	E
C	P	U	V	C	(E)	T	I	N	N	F	C	O	H	E
I	M	L	A	A	N	(D)	O	O	O	T	O	E	S	B
T	E	A	R	R	E	I	R	R	N	T	D	N	R	I
A	V	T	T	D	T	D	P	A	Y	L	E	I	E	R
M	E	E	U	N	E	M	E	E	D	E	R	L	B	C
O	N	C	E	R	B	A	R	G	A	I	N	N	M	S
T	T	T	E	K	C	I	T	R	E	F	F	O	E	B
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USA rolls past Italy, 100-63, to reach Basketball World Cup semis

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Losing a game at the Basketball World Cup, the U.S. national team said, was quite the wake-up call. It brought a renewed focus, an extra level of commitment, even some promises to one another that things would change.

Poor Italy.

The Americans turned words into actions and handed the Italians their worst loss in a global tournament—the World Cup or the Olympics—in nearly 55 years. Mikal Bridges scored 24 points, Tyrese Haliburton added 18 on six 3-pointers and the U.S. simply was airtight defensively on the way to a 100-63 win in the World Cup quarterfinals on Tuesday night.

"It's been a five-week journey for this group and there's five more days. That's how we look at it," U.S. coach Steve Kerr said. "We're the horse turning back to the barn. The horse starts picking up pace when it's near the barn, and that's what's happening right now. Our guys are sensing this is the end of the journey and the energy picked up tonight, the pace, the force. They know what's ahead. They know what the goal is."

Gold is the goal, and the Americans can reach the gold-medal game if they win Friday in a semifinal against either Germany or Latvia; those teams meet Wednesday in a quarterfinal. The medal games are Sunday.

The last time Italy lost a game this badly in a tournament of this level was Oct. 14, 1968—USA 100, Italy 61 in the Mexico City Olympics. The Italians shot 31% on Tuesday and were just 7 of 38 (18%) from 3-point range.

Let that show the level of improvement from the U.S.: Lithuania started 9 for 9 on 3s in what became a stunning victory over the Americans on Sunday. Italy didn't make nine 3s in the entire game Tuesday.

"We just felt that energy from the jump," Bridges said. "Everybody felt it."

It was 46-24 USA by halftime, with Austin Reaves providing the exclamation point courtesy of a follow-slam that had his teammates out of their seats. The margin was that big despite Anthony Edwards—the team's leading scorer entering Tuesday, averaging just over 20 points in the first five games of the World Cup—not even getting on the scoresheet until the first possession of the third quarter.

His heroics weren't needed. Not much on the offensive end was. The defensive effort—which was shredded for 110 points in a six-point loss to Lithuania—sure seemed like the best of the summer from the Americans.

AP

U.S. forward Mikal Bridges (5) gestures during the Basketball World Cup quarterfinal game between Italy and U.S. at the Mall of Asia Arena in Manila, Philippines, Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023.

"Everything stayed the same," U.S. point guard Jalen Brunson said. "It's just, our approach had to be a little better."

Reaves finished with 12 for the Americans, who improved to 10-1 overall this summer. Simone Fontecchio led Italy (4-2) with 18 points.

"They played very good basketball," Italian forward Luigi Datome said. "They created very good shots and they made them."

It was the quarterfinal round where it all went wrong for the U.S. at the World Cup four years ago in China. A loss to France in the Round of 8 eliminated the Americans from medal contention and started a free-fall all the way to seventh place, the worst finish ever by a U.S. team in a major men's international event.

That won't happen this time. And now the formula is clear: lock in on defense, go-go-go on offense and dare opponents to win playing the Americans' preferred way.

"Any time you can create a tough shot, rebound and go, it's going to make our offense so much better," Reaves said.

Italy had beaten the U.S. only twice in 14 previous tries at the senior men's national level, both times at the world championships—which FIBA now calls the World Cup. The first was in 1970 on the way to a fifth-place finish for the U.S. The second was in 1978, in Manila no less, a defeat that helped relegate the Americans to a fifth-place finish that year as well.

The Italians hung around, for a few minutes. The U.S. didn't get into an early hole—as has been the case multiple times in this World Cup—but the lead was only 10-8 when the Americans went to the second unit, which has been a strength all summer.

And it was again. It was 24-14 after one, the lead was out to 22 by the half and the countdown to Friday was soon on.

"We were ready," Bridges said. "And we're going to stay ready until we get out of here."

SERBIA 87, LITHUANIA 68

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Lithuania beat the U.S. at the 1998 world championships, then failed to medal. Lithuania then beat the U.S. again at the 2004 Olympics, then failed to medal.

And history will repeat itself at this World Cup.

Bogdan Bogdanovic scored 18 of his 21 points in the first half and Serbia—motivated by a serious injury endured by one of its players—topped previously unbeaten Lithuania 87-68 in the World Cup quarterfinals on Tuesday in a result that means Lithuania cannot medal in Manila this weekend. The best Lithuania can do now is fifth place.

"The game against the United States, as you can see now, it's nothing," said Lithuania's Tadas Sedekerskis, who led his team with 14 points. "It's just history. We don't have any chances to fight for the medal."

Serbia played with forward Borisa Simanic's jersey draped over a chair in its bench area. Simanic lost a kidney after being elbowed in a game against South Sudan last week; he needed surgery after that game, and complications prompted doctors to operate again Sunday and remove the damaged kidney.

"He texted us this morning," Bogdanovic said. "He texted us, 'Hey, guys, I'm all right. After two surgeries, I'm all right. I'm healthy. Just get the win. Don't think about me and let's win tonight.' It was a huge boost and huge energy tonight, so thanks to Borisa. This was also for him."

The loss continues a peculiar jinx for Lithuania, which is 3-8 all-time against the U.S. at the senior men's national level — and has turned those three wins into exactly zero medals. Lithuania was playing less than 48 hours after beating the U.S. 110-104 to close out second-round play in Manila.

But after Tuesday's loss, Lithuania insisted it wasn't still reveling in beating the Americans.

"I can guarantee 100% that we forgot it," Sedekerskis said.

Serbia (5-1) will play Canada or Slovenia in Friday's semifinals. The Canada-Slovenia quarterfinal game is Wednesday; the loser plays Lithuania (5-1) in the consolation playoffs Thursday. Teams cannot medal after losing in the quarterfinals, but will play two more games before leaving Manila to determine fifth through eighth place in the tournament's overall standings.

Serbia is in the semifinals for the third time at the last four World Cups. It lost to Turkey in the semifinals of the 2010 tournament (and then fell to Lithuania in the bronze-medal game) and lost to the U.S. in the title game of the 2014 event.

Filip Petrusev scored 17 points and Stefan Jovic added 11 for Serbia.

Rokas Jokubaitis had 13 points and nine assists, while Jonas Valanciunas and Ignas Brazdeikis scored 11 apiece for Lithuania.

Serbian player loses kidney after getting injured at Basketball World Cup

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Serbian Basketball Federation announced Monday that forward Borisa Simanic has lost one of his kidneys as the result of an injury sustained during a World Cup game against South Sudan.

Simanic has been operated on twice in Manila, the team said. Additional complications presented themselves after the first surgery, team doctor Dragan Radovanovic said, requiring the second procedure on Sunday where the kidney was removed.

Serbia plays Lithuania in a World Cup quarterfinal on Tuesday.

"It was really tough for us when we heard what happened," Serbian forward Nikola Milutinov told reporters after the team practiced Monday. "First, we didn't believe it was such a bad thing. It's really affected us. We're really praying for him that he's going to be good as soon as possible."

Simanic was injured with just under 2 minutes left in Serbia's win over South Sudan on Wednesday. South Sudan's Nuni Omot was trying to score under the basket, elbowing Simanic in that process. Simanic yelled in obvious pain, then fell to his knees a few seconds later.

Omot insisted he was not trying to cause an injury. And Monday, Omot released a statement through South Sudan's basketball federation, which called the play where Simanic got hurt "unintentional and unfortunate."

"I am deeply saddened by the news of Simanic's injuries," Omot said in the statement. "As a sportsman, I firsthand understand the severity of his situation and I am deeply sorry that this happened. No player should have to go through that. I pray for Simanic's recovery and speedy return to the court."

Milutinov said the injury has shaken the Serbian team deeply.

"We didn't sleep after that game. We were trying to find blood for him, because he was losing a lot of blood," Milutinov said. "It was really a tough moment for everybody. I hope this will never happen to anybody in the world."

The team is not certain when Simanic will be released from the Manila hospital where he is being treated. Simanic scored three points in about 20 minutes off Serbia's bench in three games during the World Cup.

Altuve homers in each of first 3 innings, Astros rout Rangers 14-1

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Jose Altuve homered in each of the first three innings, starting with a pair off All-Star right-hander Nathan Eovaldi in his return from the injured list, and the Houston Astros pummeled the Texas Rangers 14-1 on Tuesday night.

Altuve greeted Eovaldi (11-4) with a leadoff homer, then ended the pitcher's first outing since July 18 with another drive into the seats in left field on the 35th pitch with one out in the second.

The third homer — and 15th of the season for Altuve — was to center field off Dane Dunning, a starter who came out of the bullpen so the Rangers could get Eovaldi back on the mound without a rehab appearance coming off a right forearm strain.

Martín Maldonado hit two homers and slugger Yordan Alvarez connected for his 24th as the defending World Series champion Astros set a Globe Life Field record with six long balls while wrapping up a third consecutive series win over the Rangers.

Texas, which hasn't had a winning season since 2016, has lost 14 of 18 games and is two back in the AL West for the second time since a run of 140 consecutive days atop the division ended in late August.

Altuve homered in four consecutive at-bats going back to Houston's 13-6 win in the series opener Monday. The run ended with a groundout against Dunning in the fifth. Altuve struck out in the seventh.

Framber Valdez (11-9) allowed one run on six hits with four walks and four strikeouts in seven innings. The All-Star left-hander ended a three-game losing streak against the Rangers.

MARLINS 6, DODGERS 3

MIAMI (AP)—Bryan De La Cruz hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning to break a tie in Miami's victory over Los Angeles.

The Dodgers played their first game since the arrest of star pitcher Julio Urías late Sunday on a felony charge of corporal injury on a spouse or cohabitant. Urías did not travel with the Dodgers to Miami.

Jazz Chisholm Jr., Josh Bell and Jake Burger also homered to help Miami win its fifth straight.

Los Angeles reliever Ryan Yarbrough (7-6) hit Burger with a pitch before De La Cruz drove a cutter into the seats in left-field for his 18th homer and a 5-3 lead. Chisholm followed with a solo blast

Andrew Nardi (7-1) pitched a scoreless eighth and Tanner Scott got the last three outs for his fifth save.

The Dodgers tied it at 3 on Chris Taylor's homer against reliever A.J. Puk leading off the seventh.

YANKEES 5, TIGERS 1

NEW YORK (AP)—Giancarlo Stanton smashed his 400th home run, Gerrit Cole burnished his Cy Young Award credentials and New York beat Detroit.

DJ LeMahieu hit his second leadoff homer in four games and Gleyber Torres had a two-run double for the last-place Yankees (69-69), who have won four straight and seven of eight to get back to .500 for the first time since Aug. 15.

Stanton's two-run homer off reliever José Cisnero broke a 1-all tie in the sixth inning. The slugger reached 400 homers in 1,520 career games — fourth-fastest in major league history behind Mark McGwire (1,412), Babe Ruth (1,475) and Alex Rodriguez (1,489). Albert Pujols is fifth at 1,523.

Stanton's 451-foot laser to left-center was caught by a fan with a glove in the front row of the elevated bleachers above Detroit's bullpen. The large videoboard displayed the No. 400 milestone and Stanton — often the target of boos at Yankee Stadium since arriving in 2018 — came out of the dugout for a curtain call, doffing his helmet to the crowd of 31,553.

The 2017 NL MVP with Miami, Stanton became the 58th big league player to reach 400 home runs and 10th to do it with the Yankees.

CARDINALS 10, BRAVES 6

ATLANTA (AP)—Tyler O'Neill and Nolan Gorman hit two-run homers to spoil Michael Soroka's promotion to Atlanta and St. Louis held on to beat the Braves.

O'Neill's homer to left field drove in Jordan Walker in the second inning. Gorman added a 426-foot blast off Soroka in the third and a ninth-inning homer, his 26th, off Michael Tonkin.

The major league-leading Braves, coming off an 8-2 road trip that included three wins in four games against the Los Angeles Dodgers, couldn't keep pace with the Cardinals, who are last in the NL Central. St. Louis led 9-1. The Braves cut the deficit to 9-6 before Gorman's second homer.

ORIOLES 5, ANGELS 4, 10 INNINGS

ANAHEM, Calif. (AP)—Jordan Westburg brought home the go ahead run on a ground out in the 10th inning and Baltimore beat Los Angeles for itsfourth straight victory.

Ryan O'Hearn and Ryan Mountcastle each had RBI singles in the ninth inning to give the AL-leading Orioles a brief

AP

Houston Astros' Jose Altuve connects for a solo home run in the second inning of a baseball game against the Texas Rangers, Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023, in Arlington, Texas.

lead, while Adley Rutschman also drove in a run.

Mickey Moniak tied it for the Angels at 4 in the ninth inning with a two-out RBI single. Jose Soriano (0-2) took the loss.

Right-hander Joey Krehbiel (1-0) got one out in the ninth for the victory and Shintaro Fujinami worked the 10th for his second save. Baltimore improved to 87-51 with its sixth consecutive series victory.

TWINS 8, GUARDIANS 3

CLEVELAND (AP)—Jorge Polanco hit a sacrifice fly and Donovan Solano added a three-run triple in Minnesota's five-run eighth inning and the Twins pushed their lead in the AL Central to seven games over second-place Cleveland.

Polanco hit a shot deep enough to right off Trevor Stephan (6-6) to score pinch-runner Joey Gallo and break a 3-3 tie. Later in the inning, Solano's liner to center skipped past outfielder Myles Straw and rolled to the wall, clearing the bases.

Minnesota's Christian Vázquez, who homered in the sixth off Guardians reliever Matt Moore to tie it 3-all, led off the eighth with a single and Willi Castro doubled down the left-field line. Gallo came on for Vázquez and scored easily on Polanco's fly ahead of Will Brennan's throw.

RAYS 8, RED SOX 6, 11 INNINGS

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—Brandon Lowe hit a three-run homer in the 11th inning and Tampa Bay beat Boston.

Lowe won it with his 18th homer off Kenley Jansen (3-6), who had his streak of converting 20 consecutive chances end. Erasmo Ramirez (3-3) got the win.

Luis Urías hit an RBI single in the 11th inning to give Boston a 6-5 lead.

The Rays loaded the bases in the 10th with one out against John Schreiber but failed to score when Josh Lowe was thrown out by right fielder Adam Duvall trying to score from third on Christian Bethancourt's fly.

REDS 7, MARINERS 6

CINCINNATI (AP)—Nick Martini came off the bench to hit a tying three-run homer run in the eighth inning, Christian Encarnación-Strand drove in Elly De La Cruz in the ninth and Cincinnati beat AL West-leading Seattle.

Julio Rodríguez hit two home runs for the Mariners, who have lost three straight for the first time since Aug. 12-14.

De La Cruz led off the ninth with an infield hit, stole second and scored with a head-first slide on Encarnación-Strand's single to right.

ROYALS 7, WHITE SOX 6

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Gregory Santos balked in the winning run in the ninth inning as Kansas City overcame a six-run deficit to beat Chicago.

It was the Royals' first series win since July 28-Aug. 3. They entered the ninth trailing 6-5. Nick Loftin reached on an error and went to second on a single by Michael Massey. Maikel Garcia hit into a fielder's choice before Bobby Witt Jr. singled in the tying run. With two outs, Santos intentionally walked MJ Melendez to load the bases, bringing up Edward Olivares.

Santos was called for a balk on his first pitch to Olivares.

BLUE JAYS 7, ATHLETICS 1

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Former Athletics ace Chris Bassitt allowed one run in eight strong innings and Toronto took sole possession of the third AL wild-card spot with a win over Oakland.

Toronto's fifth win in six games moved the Blue Jays past the Rangers in the crowded AL playoff race.

The Blue Jays did it behind plenty of offense and a superb outing from Bassitt (14-7). The 6-foot-5 right-hander allowed seven hits and didn't walk anyone while striking out seven.

CUBS 11, GIANTS 8

CHICAGO (AP)—Seiya Suzuki and Christopher Morel homered during Chicago's six-run seventh inning and the Cubs beat San Francisco for their third straight victory.

Suzuki had four hits and three RBIs as Chicago remained 2 1/2 games back of NL Central-leading Milwaukee. Yan Gomes added three hits and two RBIs, and Drew Smyly (10-9) got three outs for the win.

The Cubs moved a season-high 11 games over .500 at 75-64. They are 49-28 since they dropped to 26-36 with a 3-1 loss at the Angels on June 8.

J.D. Davis, LaMonte Wade Jr., Mike Yastrzemski and Wilmer Flores homered for San Francisco in its fifth consecutive loss. Davis and Joc Pederson each had three hits.

ROCKIES 3, DIAMONDBACKS 2

PHOENIX (AP)—Kyle Freeland threw six solid innings, rookie Nolan Jones added an RBI double and Colorado beat Arizona.

The Diamondbacks—locked in a tight battle for one of three National League wild-card spots—fell behind the Miami Marlins and Cincinnati Reds for the final spot. Arizona has lost six of its past eight games.

Freeland (6-14) gave up two runs on six hits, striking out two and walking three. Tyler Kinley worked the ninth for his second save this season and third of his big-league career. It was a short night for Arizona rookie Brandon Pfaadt (1-8), who gave up three runs on six hits over 3 2/3 innings.

BREWERS 7, PIRATES 3

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Brandon Woodruff pitched seven shutout innings. Mark Canha had a two-run single to cap a six-run fifth inning and NL Central-leading Milwaukee beat Pittsburgh.

Woodruff (4-1) allowed just two hits, singles to Ji Hwan Bae in the first inning and Endy Rodriguez in the fifth. Woodruff also had six strikeouts and two walks while improving to 14-3 with a 2.36 ERA in his last 29 starts dating to last season.

Connor Joe broke up the Brewers' shutout bid by hitting a three-run home run in the ninth inning off Clayton Andrews for just his second hit in his last 29 at-bats.

METS 11, NATIONALS 5

WASHINGTON (AP)—Pete Alonso hit his 42nd homer and Brandon Nimmo went deep twice to back a sharp outing by from José Quintana, and New York thumped Washington.

Francisco Alvarez hit a three-run shot in the first inning, and Francisco Lindor also homered for the Mets, who finally gave Quintana some run support. The Mets had scored two or fewer runs in six of his eight starts this season.

Quintana (2-5) worked a season-high seven innings. He gave up his only run two batters into the game and didn't allow a hit after the third.

PADRES 8, PHILLIES 0

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Fernando Tatis Jr. hit a 431-foot home run into the second deck in left field on his bobblehead night and Pedro Avila combined with two relievers on a three-hitter to earn his first big league victory as San Diego beat Philadelphia.

Tatis' 23rd homer opened the three-run fourth and the Padres added four more in the sixth against Michael Lorenzen (8-9). That was more than enough for Avila (1-2), who has 14 appearances in parts of four big league seasons.

Xander Bogaerts had four hits and scored three times, and Luis Campusano drove in three runs.

Coco Gauff reaches first US Open semifinal at 19

NEW YORK (AP) — Coco Gauff knows what it takes to reach a Grand Slam final. Been there, done that. What she hasn't experienced is winning a major championship.

So her first trip to the semifinals at the U.S. Open does not leave her satisfied at all, no matter how dominant the performance was that got her to that stage.

» **Ben Shelton gets to his first at 20**

"The dreams never came with the people in the stands and autographs. That was never in the dreams," the 19-year-old from Florida said. "It was just, like, the trophy."

That hardware is getting closer. Gauff dealt just fine with the heat, the humidity and a big-hitting opponent to defeat Jelena Ostapenko 6-0, 6-2 on Tuesday, becoming the first American teenager to reach the final four at Flushing Meadows since Serena Williams in 2001.

"Even though (by) the semifinals, (in) theory, if you want to win, there's two matches left, you can't think like that," the sixth-seeded Gauff said. "I'm still in the mindset that I'm in the beginning of the tournament. That's what I have learned in the past (from) being in quarterfinals: Before, I would think, 'Close to the end.' But right now, I have the mentality that I told myself, 'I still have another two weeks to play.' So that's where my mind is at. Then, obviously when it's over, it's over. But right now, I'm just saying, 'Another two weeks.'"

This was the 16th victory in her past 17 matches for Gauff, who will face No. 10 Karolina Muchova of the Czech Republic on Thursday. Muchova, who made it to the French Open final in June, also used a terrific start—saving the nine break points she faced in the opening set, all in one game—to get past No. 30 Sorana Cirstea of Romania 6-0, 6-3 at night.

A year ago at this time, Muchova was ranked 235th and exited the U.S. Open in the first round. But she showed off every bit of the variety she possesses to accumulate a 32-12 advantage in winners against Cirstea, who was appearing in her first Slam quarterfinal since 2009.

For Gauff, a first-round exit at Wimbledon in July sure feels like ages ago.

She reached the final at Roland Garros last year, but lost that title match to Iga Swiatek; they could have met again in the U.S. Open quarterfinals. But Swiatek didn't make it, instead losing to Ostapenko in the fourth round. That defeat not only ended Swiatek's title defense but also meant she will relinquish her spot at No. 1 in the WTA rankings to Aryna Sabalenka next week.

AP

Coco Gauff, of the United States, reacts to the crowd after defeating Jelena Ostapenko, of Latvia, during the quarterfinals of the U.S. Open tennis championships, Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023, in New York.

"I was shocked," Gauff said.

When she is on the mark, as she was Sunday night against Swiatek, 2017 French Open champion Ostapenko, a 26-year-old from Latvia, can be as challenging an opponent as there is, because she goes for broke on nearly every stroke. If the balls land in, she is in business. When they don't, she is in trouble.

She finished with 36 unforced errors Tuesday; Gauff had 14.

"Honestly," said Ostapenko, who beat Gauff at the Australian Open in January, "I was expecting a little bit more from her today."

Ostapenko complained that she had a short turnaround because that victory over Swiatek ended so late and then the Gauff match was so early—it began shortly after noon, with the temperature at 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 Celsius) and the humidity above 50%, prompting a rule change about the use of the roofs on the two largest arenas.

"I was pretty sure (I was) going to play at night session, because that's what they told me," Ostapenko said. "When the schedule came out, I saw I'm playing first match and was, like, 'Wow, that's a little bit strange scheduling.'"

Tournament referee Jake Garner said Ostapenko's team did not request—and was not informed she would receive—a late start.

"She certainly wasn't told anything from me or anybody on the referee's staff. There's always conversations between coaches, players to the referee's, team tournament management, about the schedule, but I don't believe that she was promised anything about specifically when she would play," Garner said. "And that would be very unusual for anybody to be promised anything that far in advance."

In men's action, Ben Shelton, a 20-year-old American, reached his first Grand Slam semifinal, and now meets 23-time major champion Novak Djokovic of Serbia.

The unseeded Shelton beat No. 10 Frances Tiafoe 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (7), 6-2 at night in the first Grand Slam quarterfinal between two African-American men in the Open era. Djokovic got past No. 9 Taylor Fritz of the U.S. 6-1, 6-4, 6-4.

Gauff, naturally, had the pro-American crowd on her side. They applauded and yelled for her even before she stepped out on court, reacting when she was shown on the arena's video screens during a prematch TV interview.

U15

From page 20

representing the NMI."

NMI lost their last two games in 0-23 blowouts last Sunday against South Korea and last Monday against the People's Republic of China. Against Mongolia last Friday, they lost 0-4, and the one bright spot in their tourney was when Paul Anthony Lizama nipped two goals against Macau last Saturday, but settled for a 2-5 loss.

Mita said about their first two games, "We were able to compete well despite playing in very hot weather and facing strong opponents. Against Macau, we scored two goals and that was the best performance of our team in this tournament."

With four straight games played in a row, Mita said that it was very challenging for the team. He said some players got sick because of fatigue, but that they did their best to recover and be ready for the next game.

He added, "The last two matches (versus South Korea and China) we had tough results, but the boys fought all the way to the end against an extremely challenging environment."

The U15 team is made up of Terrel Kileleman-Hix, Taiga Namai-Scoggins, Aiden Camacho, Jayson Tagabuel, Michael Miller, Arstin Tagabuel, Mark Costales, Chan Woong Yeom, Chan Seo Yeom, Paul Anthony Lizama, Rooney Gil, Akoni Matsumoto, Bennet Haro, Bennetton Haro, Gaius Ranada, Yutaka Kadokura, Nolan Ngewakl, Moshe Sikkel, Kian Estolas, and Edward Arriola III.

Mita, assistant coach Jireh Yobech, assistant coach Konomi Suzuki, team manager Mikki Vargas, assistant team manager Khristelle Itaas, and physical therapist Hazel Mabasa accompanied the team.

EAFF

The NMI U15 National Soccer Team poses for a photo before their match against South Korean in the EAFF U15 Men's National Championship 2023 last Sunday at Qingdao, China.

SBL

From page 20

With baseball finally back this year, Hocog said that the future of baseball is bright. He added, "as a SBL board, we wanted to bring the baseball culture back."

The Saipan Little League Baseball Association could not organize this year, hence SBL took charge and returned baseball to the youth with the U12 tourney.

Hocog then asked the community for their patience as they make strides to bring baseball back.

"We do welcome any help or any insights that we may have not seen because we're on the ground, but if we have people that are willing to volunteer and help out the Saipan Baseball League, we're definitely up for that. So, we believe that the future of baseball and softball in the CNMI is looking bright," said Hocog.

Hocog then specifically thanked board member Alvin Takai for keeping the baseball fields—Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan and Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios at the Oleai Sports Complex—beautiful.

He then recognized all SBL board members for "making this all happen. The board members were the people who showed up to prepare the field, announce, and call the games. We were the umpires, the statisticians, the grounds crew—so a huge shout out to them."

Hocog said they look forward to more tournaments within the community and bringing the bat-and-ball game back to the CNMI.

PRIORITY

From page 20

the duo led their team to a close 5-point victory.

From the opening tip-off, it was a heart-pounding showdown as both teams took turns with the lead. Priority Care led at the end of the first quarter, 21-16, but Home Smart's fire was ignited in the last minutes of the second quarter.

With a 33-27 lead, Home Smart's defense held down Priority Care to just 3 more points in that quarter. Meanwhile, Home Smart's Ronald Rueda was fouled multiple times toward the end which led to the exchange of favor for their team, 40-36.

The halftime pep talks though lit Priority Care's fire once again and in a close neck-and-neck race to keep their heads above water for the lead, 58-55, at the end of the quarter.

It was still anybody's game as the lead swayed to and from both teams, with Rueda keeping pace with Duenas as he scored 35 points. However, his teammates let him carry them as P.J. Castro scored the second highest with 8.

King and Duenas continued to elicit ooh's and aah's from the crowd with their breathtaking 3-pointers and relentless drives to the rim—and as they both rapidly-fired crucial points in the final minutes to keep the lead and the win.

In the second game that night, Vik Team blew IT&E out of the water, 111-64. Last Tuesday, Choju defeated Bridge Capital, 88-75; and Solid North beat Socho, 77-68.

As of Sept. 5, the team standings in the open division Pool A are: Solid North 4-1; Easy Riders 3-0; Loving Hands 2-1; The Game 2-1; Priority Care 2-2; Winners Group 1-3; Socho 1-4; and Home Smart 0-3.

In the open division Pool B, Checkpoint is at 4-0; CK Saints 3-0; JTM Saipan 2-1; Choju 2-2; Vik Team 2-3; Bridge Capital 1-3; 670 Rollers 1-3, and IT&E 0-3.

Blue Haus leads the masters division in wins with 3-1; A Plus Team 2-0; JSN 2-0; Vizion 1-1; Legends 1-1; Lakay 1-1; Win Pacific 0-3; and Long Shot 0-3.

Priority Care 79 – Duenas 36, King 30, Agulto 8, Pelisamen 2, Reyes 2.

Home Smart 74 – Rueda 35, Ramos 8, Baul 5, Bungabong 5, Mortos 5, Palima 3, Castro 3, Marasigan 2, Cubal 2, Bacuyag 2, Villamel 2, Alcoseba 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-16, 40-36, 58-55, 79-74.

USA rolls past Italy, 100-63, to reach Basketball World Cup semis.

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Coco Gauff reaches first US Open semifinal at 19.

PAGE 19

U15 team needs to keep 'never give up' spirit

EAFF

The NMI's Nolan Ngewakl, second right, attempts to dissuade China's attack at NMI's goal during the U15 national soccer team's matchup in the EAFF U15 Men's Championship 2023 in Qingdao, China on Monday.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The NMI U15 Men's National Soccer Team that was in Qingdao, China for the FIFA Forward Developmental Programme EAFF U15 Men's Championship 2023 lost all four games in the tourney.

Despite that, head coach Michiteru Mita said that the team needs to "keep their passion for football, keep the 'never give up' spirit, and learn to adapt to situations."

Mita said that the tournament they went through was "a different standard of football and they know they need to improve more and work harder."

He added that the players did learn a lot from the competition—on and off the pitch, and that "They understand that they have to keep their pride and play their best when they go out there as a national player

See U15 on Page 19

SBL: We want to bring baseball culture back

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

After years of absence, the Saipan Baseball League has finally revived America's favorite pastime in the CNMI with its recently concluded 2023 Tan Holdings-SBL major league season and the SBL U12 Baseball Tournament.

LEIGH GASES

Shine Tenorio, Saipan Baseball League board member, center, congratulates and thanks Braves coaching staff in red, and Toros coaching staff after the SBL U12 Baseball Tournament championships last Friday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan softball field.

Kyle Hocog, a board member of the SBL, said last Saturday after the championship game of the U12 Baseball Tournament between the Braves and Toros that the tourney was a successful one.

The overall tournament, he said, "was a great experience for everybody to go through, especially for the youth not having baseball for about five years. It's definitely about time. I'm glad that we have some great, active board members to let this happen and play out."

See SBL on Page 19

Priority Care douses Home Smarts' fire, 79-74

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Red-hot Priority Care doused Home Smart's equally as hot fire in a close 79-74 match up in the open division of the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

Priority Care's kingpin, the aptly named Steve King, kept the crowd entertained and alive during his 30-point performance—which in turn also kept his team in the game. However, Matt Duenas' game-high 36 points was the icing on the cake as

See PRIORITY on Page 19

LEIGH GASES

Priority Care's Steve King is wide open for a layup during their game against Home Smart in the open division of the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.